

S E R M O N
ON
SEVERAL IMPORTANT
S U B J E C T S.

BY THE LATE REV. JAMES COWAN,
COLINSBURGH. *K*

PUBLISHED AT THE DESIRE

OF

HIS PEOPLE,

FOR THE BENEFIT

OF

HIS WIDOW AND CHILDREN.

*To which is prefixed, some Account of his Life and
Character.*

EDINBURGH:

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TO
ALL HUMANE
AND
02
TENDER-HEARTED CHRISTIANS;
THE
: FOLLOWING SERMONS
ARE
MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY
THE EDITOR.

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SOME ACCOUNT
OF THE
LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF THE
AUTHOR, &c.

CHRISTIAN READER,

IT is not the design of this biographical epitome to hold up man to the undue veneration of fellow mortals, but to give a brief display of the singular and eminent gifts, precious graces, useful life, and happy death, of the late Rev. James Cowan, minister of the gospel in Colinsburgh; that the glorious excellencies, and the sovereign virtue of the Great God our Saviour, may appear in His dealings with him. As to his nativity, I shall only say that he was born the 27th of February 1738, of pious and respectable parents, in the vicinity of Whitebank, and Parish of Stow. He received the first principles of religion from his godly
a father,

father, William Cowan, a disciple of Mr Mungo Thomson, a zealous sufferer in the cause of a covenanted reformation ; and to maintain the testimony of a good conscience for the love of Christ, he foretook all earthly possessions, lost his hereditary estate, which was seized by his uncle, who conformed to the times. He survived the revolution until the commencement of the secession from the established church of Scotland, because of some important deviations from her received principles in the times of our purest reformation. The said William Cowan, Messrs Thomson, Hunter, &c. were concerned as a committee, in drawing up what is called the people's testimony, to which (as may be seen) their signatures are affixed. We have noticed already that the Rev. James Cowan was trained up under the tuition of his father, in the knowledge of practical religion, and from a child knew the scriptures. He gave early proofs of pregnant talents, insomuch that he could repeat the most of the Shorter Catechism (before he could read it) by hearing it said in the family. He had made great proficiency
in

in the knowledge of the English tongue, and doctrines of the gospel, before he was sixteen years of age, about which time he entered the grammar school in Selkirk, under the care of Mr James Watson, late teacher in Haddington, a gentleman eminent in his profession for his knowledge of classical authors; whom he attended five years, during which he acquired the Latin, some Greek, and a little French. Then he entered the university of Edinburgh, and prosecuted his studies with great assiduity, under the several professors of that college; and soon became a student of divinity, under the learned, judicious, pious, and mild Rev. Dr Hamilton. During his residence at Edinburgh, for nigh the space of ten years, he acquired no small knowledge of anatomy and physic; partly by attendance on lectures, but chiefly through his familiar connections with some eminent students in these professions, which so improved and polished his acute and penetrating genius, that he became a notable instrument in the hand of God, in giving relief to many, even in the most desperate cases.

Having

Having finished his studies at Edinburgh, he obtained ample certificates from the Rev. Dr Hamilton, and other ministers in and about that city, as well as from persons of high rank in the world, he went to England, was licenced to preach the Gospel by a presbyterian class of dissenters in Newcastle upon Tyne; where he often assisted at sacramental communions afterwards, to the great satisfaction and joy of all that heard him. In his return to Scotland in the character of a probationer, he preached a few Sabbaths for the great, eminently pious, faithful, and laborious, the Rev. Dr Erskine, and for other ministers in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh. He was immediately recommended to the Congregation of Colinsburgh in Fife, then vacant by the death of the grave and godly Mr Colier. And on hearing him, he was the unanimous choice of a very numerous people, and ordained to be their pastor by Messrs Gillespie and Cruden, in the year 1771, after he had preached statedly among them for nigh a year and a half before.

He

He was confessedly a faithful labourer in the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, fervent in spirit, &c. spending and being spent, that he might fulfil his ministry, and finish his course with joy. After the death of the Rev. Thomas Gillespie, and Mr Cruden's translation from Glasgow to London, he often did all the work relating to the solemn communion of the Lord's Supper himself, which was very great, for he delivered two sermons each day, besides sometimes six or seven table-services on the Lord's day, which were concluded with long and pathetic exhortations. And, notwithstanding of some bodily internal infirmities, and external conflicts, for conscience sake, yet his bow abode in its strength unto his last. Although his popular talents were naturally great, yet he was never known to be given to ostentation; but, on the contrary, he was diffident and modest, as appears from the account he gives of himself in a letter to a friend, when about to enter on trials for licence. Says he, I have agreed to converse with a certain reverend gentleman, in order to my being taken on trials; but

but I am so weak that I am afraid I will not be able to speak common sense. Perhaps to keep him humble, to speak the language of inspiration, there was given him a thorn in the flesh in his younger years, *viz.* a painful swelling in his back by his right shoulder, which increased, and became acute, and, at last, intolerable, being raised into the form of a large egg, seemingly full of acrimonious air or vapour. As the case was alarming, a consultation with physicians was necessary. Accordingly, fourteen years before his death, he sustained an operation with great magnanimity and patience; which was performed by a very able member of the Faculty, Mr Menzies, and entirely eradicated, in so much that he never found any pungent sensation in that part of the body afterwards. And although he lost a very great quantity of blood, that, without doubt, made a considerable change in his constitution, he soon recovered his strength, and was able, in a few weeks, to preach to his people again. The first attack of his last illness was most violent; but was greatly alleviated by the applications of his great doctor, as he commonly

commonly called the physician described above. He never acquired soundness and strength of body after he was taken first ill, *viz.* in July 1794, probably owing to the relaxing heat of the preceding month, and some infectious vapour of the atmosphere he had caught. He became much worse during the storm last winter, and declined every day; yet, though loaded with trouble, and reduced to a shadow, he preached to his loving people twice every Sabbath, except the last, which was six weeks before his death, and would not be restrained; but said he had served the Lord with the prime of his strength, and that he would continue to do so with what remained. He was never heard complain under his greatest sufferings; but often said, that the grave would be an acceptable bed to him. I am told that, when he had any respite, he was much employed in prayer and meditation on the scriptures. And that, when any cloud eclipsed his evidences for eternal life, he would repeat, with great elevation of mind and voice, these words in 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22, 23: "All are your's, and ye are
Christ's,

"Christ's, and Christ is God's." His trouble to the last resembled the first symptoms of it when seized in July, consisting of acute pains, which were more increased in his bowels, &c. than they were in the summer preceding his death, of which he had frequent intermissions, and was able to speak at times with much freedom, until his last night in this world of vanity, imperfection, and sorrow, when he became very sick and faint, until the morning of April 15. 1795, at a quarter past eight o'clock, he departed in peace; leaving behind him a sorrowful wife and five children, viz. four girls, and one amiable boy aged three years.

He was of a stature tall and straight, being full six feet, and every way proportionable. Of a sprightly complexion, and of an open countenance, and exceedingly affable, social, and communicative. His address was gentle and courteous. His presence and converse cheered the hearts of the sad, and transmitted a ray of light and vivacity in company: Even at his approach, the stranger was prejudiced in his favours. In short, he

he was a loving husband, a tender hearted father, a faithful pastor, and an affectionate friend. The hearts, and expressions of his hearers in words, and in their countenances, are the most lively epistles of mutual commendation of him and of them. For almost none of his people which I have met with speak of him without a flood of tears, being sensible how beneficent he had been, both to the souls and bodies of men. He was far from being implacable. For he was ready in the dead of the stormy night to rise from his bed, to save the life even of his enemy without fee or reward. The want of him in Colinsburgh and the adjacent country is now much lamented. Although such as had grown up with him in familiarity did not so much mind his peculiar gifts and excellencies, yet, now when he is gone, they become the subject of their serious reflection. Some persons of noble and honourable rank, eminent for learning and their great knowledge of human nature, took much notice of him in his youth, and often commended him as a person whose talents and disposition were eminently fit-

ted for social life, and rendering him a blessing to mankind.

There is all reason to believe, that he was led or rather thrust forward towards the great work of the warfare assigned him in providence, by a divine impulse, of which some instances more than common might be related, (if expedient), both from what he was pleased to reveal when but a youth, and what impressions some others had concerning him, though living at the distance of nigh twenty miles. They thought that they heard him preach along with his brother, on Rev. xix. 7. But this may be said to be a dream or vision only; be it so: Nevertheless it is perceptible, as may appear more evident from the imperfect history I have given of his life: So that, What Paul mentions in his charge to Timothy were in some measure accomplished in him; 1 Tim. i. 18. All his life time, death seemed to be a subject very familiar to him, and engrossed many of his thoughts. Just as he had entered the grammar school, he being one night greatly afflicted with an inflammation about his head, which obliged him to quit
his

his bed and retire to the fields, where he spent as considerable a time in meditation as he was able; on his return, he addressed a near relation, some years older than himself, with an air of certainty, saying, I will die before you, and you will survive me a considerable time. On many occasions he had a great foresight of events, both respecting himself and others, and was sometimes found weeping sore in secret, for the losses of others, and that before they came to pass. Of the latter there are still three witnesses in life, of a most extraordinary and unexpected emotion of affection, which neither he nor they understood at the time, until the decree brought it forth some months after, by the death of a name son whom he greatly loved, as he testified in a very pathetic and consolatory letter to the mourning parents.

I shall only add, that he was no enthusiast, but endued with a sound understanding and judgment, tenacious memory, warm heart, much presence of mind, and ready wit; had a great fund of good humour, and a peculiar cast of conveying a group of ideas by familiar metaphors, in a facetious and pleasant

pleasant way, and even what he said ironically, often charmed the fancy of his friends. Although he was no studious politician, either in matters of church or state, yet he perceived with grief the corruption of the times, and the evil influence (through error or design) that marred the purity and peace of both. He was a sincere lover of our celebrated constitution, king, and country; fervent in prayer for the prosperity thereof; but extremely sorry when their glory was eclipsed by mal-administration, irreligion, and immorality. His ardent wish was, that the law of God, and spirit of Christianity, might inspire the hearts, enter into the counsels and government of our rulers in church and state, and adorn the profession and practice of all ranks, so that a due subordination might be preserved, and peace, order, and harmony promoted among men and Christians; expecting, that when our ways did once please the Lord, he would make our enemies to be at peace with us. But, now being gone, he is for ever out of the reach of all our calamities under the sun, sleeps in the dust, as to his body, while his spirit is
with

with the Lord, until he shall be revealed from heaven at the last day, &c. Would to God that prayer was engraven on our hearts, Deut. xxxii. 29. "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"

He often told his sympathizing friends that came to see him during his last illness, that he always had notice or warning, one way or another, when any thing uncommon was to take place in which he was concerned. But, said he, if I am to die at this time, the Lord hath hid it from me!

It is hoped, that every candid reader of the following discourses, will make a charitable allowance for what defect they may perceive in them. Had they been designed for the press by himself, and prepared by his own hand, without doubt they would have given general satisfaction. Nevertheless, it is expected that Christians will find some food to their souls therein, and nothing but truth, and what is designed for edification. The editor confesses, that sermon eighth is entirely his own. The writer of this account concurred with the friends of
the

the deceased, in committing this work to the care of the editor ; who has spared no trouble in forwarding the same. Upon account of his distance, however, from the press, many things may appear in the following discourses, which, had he been near it, would have been corrected. Although the poem and the table services, which were promised to subscribers in the proposal papers, are not published in this volume, yet it is hoped that subscribers will receive the above account of the Reverend James Cowan's life as an equivalent, which to them was not promised. Since the circulation of the proposals for printing this work, various poems have been discovered among the papers of the deceased, and a great variety of sacramental table services, it appears that he wrote out fully on every occasion the last mentioned, notwithstanding that he had often himself to serve six or seven tables in his own meeting house.

If this volume clear itself, and bring any thing worth while to the family of the deceased ; in short, if a generous public see the work and the design of it worthy of its encouragement ;

couragement ; it is intended to publish another volume at a reduced price : containing the lecture which the deceased delivered in Dunfermline the Sabbath immediately after the Rev. Mr Gillespie's death, on *I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c.* and two sermons, four table services, and a variety of curious, pathetic, entertaining, and religious poems, as also the letters above referred to. Although all these and this work could have been contained in one volume, yet the high price of paper, and other circumstances, would not permit more to be published at present. Subscribers, however, will please remember, that they have in this work fully the number of pages which were promised to them in the proposals.

To have beheld the Author's pulpit carriage, well timed and well conducted action ; the somewhat divine-like majesty and dignity, together with the pleasant and penetrating energy with which he spake as became a messenger of Christ, would say more for his ministrations, and would better recommend his works than all that can be wrote. Nevertheless, there are not obtained so many subscribers

subscribers for this work as might naturally have been expected, owing I believe to the delicacy of those who were intrusted with subscription papers, for almost every body that knew the deceased readily subscribed to whom I shewed the proposals. As there are a considerable number of more copies thrown off than are subscribed for, it is hoped that a generous public will not allow them to lie long in the hands of the widow and fatherless, for whose benefit they are published! If then this performance shall luckily please good christians, and afford its proprietors any relief, Proposals shall be circulated for bringing forward every one of the articles above mentioned into public view. In the mean time, that the Lord may make this book useful unto all into whose hands it may come, is the earnest prayer of,

CHRISTIAN READER,

Your sincere wellwisher,

ROBERT COWAN, *Minister.*

6 JY 59

Newcastle upon Tyne, }
November 11. 1795. }

S E R M O N I.

A

F U N E R A L S E R M O N

PREACHED ON THE DEATH

OF THE

REV. THOMAS GILLESPIE, IN DUNFERMLINE.

John xiii. 7.—*What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.*

OUR Lord has seen it meet, in all ages of his church, to exercise the faith, patience, and submission, of his people, by the dispensations of his adorable providence : And that, while carrying on the kindest designs towards them, as in this passage of sacred scripture, we find him engaged in a work of great condescension, which the disciples beheld with amazement ; though the Son of God, the Heir of all things, the King of Zion, yet He stooped to wash the feet of his creatures : Peter could not bear the thoughts of allowing his Lord to humble
A himself

himself so much for them, which was the immediate occasion of Jesus addressing him in the words of my text, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Which words are not, we apprehend, unsuitable for your present meditation, as the Lord has taken away your worthy pastor by the stroke of death. But what shall we say? He holds the keys of the invisible world in his hand: Life and death, and all things, are in his power. Even whilst we mourn, let this consideration comfort our souls, that the Lord reigneth. In further discoursing upon this text, I purpose,

First; To shew you, that there are some things in the conduct of Christ to his church, at present hard to be understood:

Secondly; That he will, in his own good time and way, clear up the reasons of his dispensations to the church:

Thirdly; That, in the expectation of this, we should fully, in the mean time, acquiesce in his procedure: Having shortly illustrated these propositions, I shall then endeavour suitably to apply the subject to the present mournful occasion.

As

As to the first proposition, it will appear that the truth of it need not be much wondered at, if we consider the dignity and matchless grandeur of Christ. He is the only begotten Son of God, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And can it be thought wonderful that the counsels and ways of God are unsearchable? "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." And well may we conclude that the schemes of the Most High are above our comprehension, and say with an inspired writer, O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! His way is in the sea, and his walk in the deep waters! His conduct is mysterious to the very sons of light; and how much more so to man, who is of yesterday, and knows nothing? We are often brought unto our wits end within the nar-

now

row circle of our own affairs; how then can we fathom his depths? How little a portion of his vast dominion is known to us? He is King over all. All things visible and invisible are subject to his nod. He ruleth amongst the armies of heaven, and over the inhabitants of this earth; and none has any right to say unto him, What doest thou? We, creatures of a day, whose foundation is in the dust, cannot know how one wheel, in the great system of providence, affects another, and gives it motion; but let the text cheer us, "What we know not now, we shall know hereafter." But more particularly,

We may see many things take place which are, to the people of God, alarming in their nature, and the final event of which they know not, and are sometimes ready to think that his goodness would have prevented them altogether. Such things as, Joseph being hated by his brethren; cast into a pit; sold for a slave; laid in the dungeon, where his feet were hurt with the iron chain! David being hunted as a partridge from his home up to the mountains. And can we behold, without

without emotion of soul, all things with Job going to misery? His wealth flying away as an eagle towards heaven; his children destroyed with the thunder of God; himself brought to the gates of the grave; his friends become his accusers; his wife turned an advocate for Satan, by tempting her husband to curse God and die. This verifies what Solomon says in his book of Ecclesiastes, "That
"there is a vanity which is done upon the
"earth; that there be just men unto whom
"it happeneth according to the work of the
"wicked: Again, there be wicked men to
"whom it happeneth according to the work
"of the righteous." Behold, accordingly, the tide of fatherly wrath flowing upon good Eli; his two sons are slain; his daughter-in-law dies; and himself falls and breaks his neck. Jacob also, when obeying God in returning to Canaan, is pursued as a thief by Laban; met by his brother with four hundred armed men to cut him off, both root and branch; the angel dislocates his thigh; his daughter is ravished; his sons murder the Shechemites; his beloved wife dies; and his concubine is defiled by Reuben.

ben. Babylon likewise we find in prosperity, while Zion lies in ashes. And the apostles were sent forth, as it were, *appointed unto death*. And, my beloved brethren, have ye not yourselves beheld the most faithful, holy, and humble saints, pressed down with sore and heavy affliction, whilst their dear Redeemer could have, in a moment, poured the oil of gladness into their wounded hearts, which would have caused their countenances sparkle joy? Have ye not seen the pious and the honest cast out of the church as unworthy of Her communion? Have ye not seen the cunning politician spreading like a green bay tree, whilst the humble, and truly good, have been tread down as the mire of the streets? Have ye not seen Zion laid waste by her enemies, whilst her King could, in the twinkling of an eye, have destroyed all her implacable foes? O Lord, how great are thy works? Thy thoughts are a great depth. These dark dispensations of providence are, in the time when the saints labour under them, hard to be understood; but Christ will sooner or later explain the cause of them. This brings me to the

Second

Second thing proposed in the method, which is to shew you, That Christ will clear up the reasons of his dispensations to his church in his own good time and way.

And, first, he does so sometimes in this world; as here, in what my text refers to, it was but a few minutes after our Lord said unto Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter," until he laid aside the towel with which he was girded, and sat himself down and explained unto them why he washed their feet, namely, to teach them humility, and to love one another: And to shew them the way of salvation. The great end, of Christ's dispensations to his people, is to prepare them for heaven; yet there are subordinate ends which they answer in this world. The disciples likely would perceive the honourable manner in which our Lord dismissed the woman of Canaan, and they would discern the reasons why he neglected her so long, viz. That her faith might be displayed, and mercy rendered sweeter, than it would have been, had it been shewn her instantly when she applied to him. In the hour of deep affliction God has often
been

been found a present comforter to his people. When they have dreaded danger most, safety and prosperity have attended them. This is remarkably verified in the case of Jacob, when afraid that his brother Esau would cut him and his company off, and take his property, even then a covenant of peace and friendship was made betwixt them. Likewise, when Joseph was in the lowest step of abasement, from thence he is unexpectedly exalted to the chariot of state, and swayed the sceptre as the king's viceroy over Egypt. Also, when Balaam was on the mountains designing to curse Israel, behold he is made to bless them; and, when the children of Israel were tormented by the cruelty of their enemies, in Egypt swiftly came their deliverance. In like manner, Job's long night of heavy adversity is chased away by the rays of a clear sun of prosperity. Indeed, affliction is the rod which the great Shepherd of the sheep holds in his right hand, and with it generally gathers home his strayed sheep from the wilderness of sin. "Before I was afflicted (said the "Royal Psalmist) I went astray, but now
" have

“have I kept thy word.” And, my friends, Does not this correspond with some of your own experience? Do ye not remember the time when ye lived in your sins as if there was no God, until he afflicted you with his rod, which caused you to consider your ways? Nay, perhaps, had you not been afflicted, ye would not yet have been within the bond of the covenant of grace, which now secures unto you heaven and immortal happiness. Had Joseph not been treated by his brethren as he was, he would not have been, in such an eminent degree, the deliverer of his family from starvation and famine, neither famous throughout all Egypt. Of this he was fully sensible long ere death closed his eyes in peace upon the world. Had not Christ been crucified, had he not risen from the grave, had he not ascended to heaven, the Holy Ghost would not have been poured down as he was upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost. This the friends of Christ did not understand, when they were mourning and saying, “We trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel:” But, when they

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were

were endowed with the Spirit from on high, they then knew that it behoved Christ to suffer, and so to enter into his glory. But, in the

Second place; The vail remains on many of Christ's dispensations to us, whilst we sojourn here in this valley of tears; but it shall be taken off when we enter into the general assembly and church of the redeemed in glory. There, in thy light, O God, we shall see light clearly! The eye shall be strengthened to view truth in all its lustre! Then we shall be fully convinced that all his dispensations towards us here below were necessary, and worked together for our eternal happiness! And we will say that he hath done all things well! And we will praise him for ever for managing all our concerns in such a manner as to promote our everlasting joy, and his own glory. There the noble and glorious army of martyrs are amply rewarded for their sufferings: They wear crowns purer than the purest gold: In their hands are the grandest palms of victory; and they are all clothed with raiment whiter than the most white snow: They

They are more glorious than the sun of the firmament; mountains of the most brilliant diamonds, placed beside them, would cease to sparkle: Of all the redeemed they are nearest the throne of the Most High: Their happiness is complete, but unspeakable: Their song of joy forever swells: They sing a new song, which shall never become old. When they were here below, they had not clear views of the causes and necessity of their sufferings; but now they see these were wisely ordered for their good, and the glory of God, and for the conviction and conversion of many who now join them in singing the praises of redeeming love. All the redeemed overcome their temporal and spiritual foes by the blood of the Lamb; to celebrate its merits they never cease. Are any of you then, my friends, under awful and distressing dispensations of divine providence, and can ye not understand the cause of them? Look forward to that happy period when your minds shall be enlarged and prepared for having a full and satisfying view of all God's dispensations towards you: There scenes, which are entirely hid from

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us here, shall be opened to our view; and, when we look back the road we came, we will perceive dangers which we escaped through trials and tribulations, which then we did not behold nor dread. An hour's converse with Christ and the redeemed will completely satisfy us with all things which beset us in this wilderness: "The Lord shall be our everlasting light, and the days of our mourning shall be ended: "And the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed us and lead us unto living fountains of waters:" There shall be joy and rejoicing forever. O who can tell the happiness of being ever with the Lord?

We now proceed, as was proposed, in the *third place*, To shew that, in the expectation of Christ clearing up the reasons of his dispensations, we should, in the mean time, fully acquiesce in them. And, in the

First place; We ought fully to acquiesce in whatever Christ does, because he hath a right to do among the armies of heaven, and in this world, just as he pleaseth. The universe is his, and the fulness thereof. If a man may do with his own what he wills, surely

surely Jesus Christ may do with his property as he inclines. We are his people, the workmanship of his hands; and we are not only his by creation, but also by redemption: He hath redeemed us with his own precious blood, therefore he has a right to do with us as he thinks proper; and we have no right to challenge his procedure, or to say unto him, "What doest thou?" When he gives us prosperity, or sends us adversity, we should acquiesce, and say, The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. But,

Secondly; We ought to acquiesce in all Christ's dispensations, because they are all directed to promote the glory of God, and the good of his church: To glorify God, and to redeem his people, did Jesus come into this world. The glory of God shines with more brilliancy in the life, sufferings, and in the death of Christ, than in the sun of the heavens. Hence Jesus our Lord says, "Father glorify thy Son, that thy Son
"also may glorify thee; I have glorified thee
"on the earth; I have finished the work
"which thou gavest me to do; and now,
"O

us here, shall be opened to our view; and, when we look back the road we came, we will perceive dangers which we escaped through trials and tribulations, which then we did not behold nor dread. An hour's converse with Christ and the redeemed will completely satisfy us with all things which beset us in this wilderness: "The Lord shall be our everlasting light, and the days of our mourning shall be ended: "And the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed us and lead us unto living fountains of waters:" There shall be joy and rejoicing forever. O who can tell the happiness of being ever with the Lord?

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" also may glorify thee ; I have glorified thee
" on the earth ; I have finished the work
" which thou gavest me to do ; and now,
" O

“ O Father, glorify thou me with thine own
“ self, with the glory which I had with thee
“ before the world was.” Man was crea-
ted for to glorify God, and to be happy in
the enjoyment of him. Jesus Christ has,
by his example and his doctrines, shewn us
how we ought to glorify God, viz. by yield-
ing obedience to his commandments, and
submitting to his will. Indeed we cannot
make God more glorious than he is in him-
self; but our glorifying him consists in a
proper acknowledgment of his glory; our
true happiness is inseparable from that ac-
knowledgment. The benevolent heart of
Christ is bent on our eternal welfare; and,
by all his dispensations towards us, he means
to promote our best interest: Therefore,
O Lord Jesus, thy will forever be done on
earth, as it is in heaven. But, in the

Third place; We ought entirely to acqui-
esce with all Christ's dispensations, because
they are wisely chosen for effecting their
ends: He is the Wisdom of God; why
then should ye doubt, O ye of little faith?
The Father hath vested him with the go-
vernment of his kingdom of providence and
grace,

grace, and of all things visible and invisible; and will not ye, his professing friends, trust him with your petty concerns? He hath given his life a ransom for your immortal souls, and will ye not confide in the dispensations of his providence? His schemes are laid in wisdom, and his designs are executed with judgment. Having finished the great scheme of salvation as to merit, proves that he is qualified for every other commendable undertaking. His plans shall not miscarry. His word, and all his dispensations, shall accomplish the ends which he designs; therefore ye would do well to acquiesce with all his proceedings, and not to rebel against the King of heaven and earth.

In the next place; We ought entirely to be resigned to all his dispensations, because we cannot alter them. By being discontented with his conduct, we not only endanger our eternal salvation, but also destroy our present comfort and happiness. When Jesus sees it meet to visit us with heavy distress, discontentment shall increase it, but never remove it. When he takes away our wealth, our fame, our honour, our health,

health, our friends by death, dissatisfaction with his proceedings shall not bring any of these to us again : It is therefore in vain to vex ourselves for what we cannot prevent. All sin in the end is unprofitable ; but discontentedness imbitters all present joys : It views all things as gloomy and distressing : Let this disposition be far from us : Let us learn to be contented with our lot in the world : Let us have no disaffection but at what is sinful in ourselves or in others. Christ manages all things well : He is at the helm of affairs, and directs all events : It is his right to command, our duty is to obey, and acquiesce with his proceedings. To reconcile us to them, he says the same thing to us in his word which he spoke personally to Peter, " What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Here we see darkly, as through a glass, but in heaven we shall see clearly in the light of God. Christ the Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice. Let us commit our souls and bodies, and all our concerns, to his management and keeping ; for he will make a good account of us at last, and present us blameless

less before his, and our Heavenly Father, in him. I proceed now to apply the subject to the present mournful occasion.

My dearly beloved brethren, The sad breach which is made upon you is from the Lord; for affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground: Your tears, therefore, I hope, are not flowing from discontentment at Christ's doings, but from humble resignation to his will, and from a Christian sorrow for the loss of your worthy pastor. His departure is indeed a heavy loss to you, but unspeakable gain to him. O what a dutiful pastor was he to you, what a loving father to me! We shall no more hear his instructions, nor enjoy his company! God has taken away His aged servant, and opened for him the doors of the invisible heaven, and received him into it, that he might inherit the kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world. Can any doubt this, when all the scripture marks of saintship were so visible in him? He is enjoying his Sabbath among the spirits of just men made perfect in glory, drinking of the

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rivers of pleasure at God's right hand, while we sit by the brooks of the wilderness. No more will he sound the glad tidings of salvation in your ears! No more shall ye have access to him for solution of your doubts! No more will he bind up your broken hearts, and lead you to Zion's Comforter! No more shall sinners hear him describing the terrors of the Lord, nor inviting them to come to Christ! No more will he edify the saints, and be the mean of building them up in their most holy faith! No more will he visit the dying, and be the honoured instrument of preparing them for eternity! He hath ceased to be a minister of the gospel in the church militant; and is now learning divinity in heaven from the mouth of the Lamb; through the merits of whose blood he came to glory. O how cleanly and honourably has he gone off the stage, while others remain vanquished and slain! O ye destitute sheep of this fold, hear the voice of the rod, and him who hath appointed it! Christ has broken one of the vessels of mercy among you, to teach you that he is not obliged to any of his creatures for the carrying

rying on of his work, though he honours them with the doing of it. Cease then from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for in a moment his countenance may be changed; in the twinkling of an eye he may be cut off: But let Israel hope in the Lord, for with him is plenteous redemption. He hath taken away your pastor to teach you by the eye, what you are now to believe through the ear, That it is appointed for all men once to die:

I am no friend to funeral panegyric; and to you, on the present occasion, it would be altogether unnecessary; for ye are well acquainted with the amiable character of your deceased pastor. Nevertheless, I would be unworthy of entering the place where I now stand on this day, were I to allow such a worthy minister of the everlasting gospel to drop into the grave, without taking notice of his well known character, which character ever shall prove honourable to his memory. The Reverend Thomas Gillespie, your late pastor, whose death this day we deplore, was truly a good man, a faithful, able, and useful minister of the gospel
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of Christ; a sincere friend, such a friend as is seldom to be met with in this wilderness; charitable, in the extreme, even to his enemies, felt their insults and persecution, but forgave them, and fervently prayed for their welfare. All the feelings of human nature were, in his constitution, keen; but they were properly regulated by the grace of his Redeemer. His public and private example was pious and praise worthy. He was always not only unstained with any vice, but also above being suspected of it, by all who knew him; and judging others by the laws of King Jesus and himself, he seldom suspected professing Christians guilty of immoralities. As a minister, you, and the people of Carnock, experimentally know that he was diligent in the exercise of his office. His principles were truly evangelical and presbyterian. Some, indeed, have called him an independent, but that had no other foundation than his labouring among you several years unconnected with any presbytery; but still he was a true presbyterian, and a rigid Calvinist. He was laid under the necessity of labouring among you
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in that situation, or of sacrificing his principles, which he would not do for any consideration, for he believed them to be consonant to the word of God. He was a real friend to civil and religious liberty, and, at the same time, a loyal subject. Because he would not obey a rigorous appointment of the General Assembly 1752, favouring the oppressive law of patronage, which was entirely inconsistent with his principles, and, in his opinion, contrary to the avowed principles and standards of the Church of Scotland, they deposed this good man, and so deprived the people of Carnock of this godly minister. The text was then impressed upon his mind, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." He this day knows perfectly what ends the Almighty had to accomplish in suffering his faithful servant to be so persecuted. Perhaps he saw this partly in this world. He was honoured to be the chief founder of a Presbytery of Relief, for the relief of Christians when oppressed by the law of patronage. Had he not been deposed in the manner he was, perhaps that presbytery

bytery had never been founded. In the foundation of it, the honest man had a single eye to the glory of God, and the good of the church. If others in that presbytery, or any called by that name, act a contrary part, he has none of the blame. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland will see their error in his deposition when too late. In process of time, it is likely she must either adopt other measures, or be abolished altogether. May the Lord reform her, and bring her back to her reformation principles. I doubt not but she will soon receive such societies and meeting houses as this into her bosom as chapels of ease, and allow them the full power of electing their own ministers, if they constitutionally apply for reception: That your deceased pastor was friendly to such a scheme, many of you well know; nay, some of you know that he had such application to the Church of Scotland in his contemplation. But God did not permit him to apply to that church for reception, which unjustly cast him out of her communion, but called him to join the General Assembly and Church of the Redeemed

Redeemed in glory. O happy, thrice happy change*!

His affliction which carried him off was of short duration. He was not long detained from the service of the sanctuary on earth, before he was called to the perfect service of God in the New Jerusalem. The body of mortality easily fell asleep in Jesus, and rests in the hope of a glorious resurrection, and the soul found its way safe, through the blood of the Lamb, to the mansions of heaven. These companions shall meet again on the day of final retribution, "Awake" and sing, ye that dwell in dust, for thy "dew is as the dew of the herbs:" We also shall meet with him again, never more to part, if we serve faithfully the same Master he did.

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* It is somewhat singular, that a few years after this sermon was preached, which was about the beginning of the year 1774, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland determined to grant chapels of ease, in connection with the church, wherever the parish minister was disliked by the parishioners. This was evidently done to stop the spread of the relief; but courts, both civil and ecclesiastical, by their rash conduct, have set political bodies in motion which they are not able to stop.—Note by the Editor.

“ A few short years of evil past,
“ We reach the happy shore,
“ Where death-divided friends at last
“ Shall meet to part no more.”

And now, my brethren, I must bid you farewell, by putting you in remembrance, that the best evidence ye can give of the sincerity of the regard which ye professed to have had for your pastor, is to imitate his virtues and graces. Be ye followers of Christ as dear children, and of them who, through faith and patience, are now inheriting the promises. “ Wherefore, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doeth so easily beset us; and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” For your encouragement to duty, “ Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the latter end of that man is peace,”

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S E R M O N II.

2 Corinthians 3. 9.—*Much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.*

As the darkness of the night is only dispelled by the beams of the rising sun, so the dark shadows of the Old Testament passed away by the introduction of the New, which exceeds the former, as much as the light of the sun does that of the moon and stars. This excellency of the New Testament the Apostle represents from the sixth to the twelfth verse of the chapter. He calls the first dispensation the ministration of the letter, consisting in outward forms, types, and figures; but the second, the ministration of the Spirit, that is, either the substance of what was typified, or the more remarkable down pouring of the grace of
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the Eternal Spirit for the conversion of mankind; either of these senses may give it this denomination, *the ministration of the Spirit*. The first was wrote on tables of stone, the second on the heart, by the spirit of the living God: The first was the ministration of terror, condemnation, and death, pronouncing them cursed who continued not to do all things written in the book of the law: The second, the ministration of righteousness and life, in as much as all the springs of pardon, hope, faith, joy, and happiness, are set open in Christ and his gospel. The first is called glorious, because God appeared to his people in a cloud of glory; and because the face of Moses did shine with brightness in such a degree, that, when he spake to the people, after he came down from Mount Sinai, it was necessary to veil his countenance: But the second, the New Testament dispensation, is still more glorious, for God hath appeared in the human nature. The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory (the glory, as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth; and
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the Spirit of the Lord Almighty descended on the apostles, in the day of Pentecost, "Like cloven tongues of fire; and they "were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and "began to speak with other tongues, as the "Spirit gave them utterance;" and they were as a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and as a royal diadem in the hand of their God.

In discoursing further on this subject, I shall shew the excellency of Christianity to that of the Old Testament dispensation. And, in the *first* place, I observe, that Christianity excels the Old Testament dispensation, as it points out Christ come in the flesh. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ "came into the world to save sinners." He who was promised from the beginning, and shadowed forth by types and ordinances, and ardently longed for, appeared in the fulness of time; for, when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son. He appeared during the standing of the second temple; went into it; taught in it; for which reason the glory of it was greater than

than the glory of the first. According to Jacob's prophecy, he came before the sceptre departed from the tribe of Judah. Now, it is certain that the sceptre did not depart from Judah, until Herod, by the senate of Rome, was made king of Judea, in whose days Christ was born : And Daniel's weeks were determined and finished in the days of Jesus. The Old Testament informs us, that he was to descend from Abraham and David, and was to be the Son of a virgin of the tribe of Judah. Now, the New Testament declares, that he is the Son of David, and of Abraham, and that he was born of Mary a virgin. As to the place of his birth, the Old Testament declares it should be in Bethlehem ; the New confirms the truth of the declaration. " Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting."

The New Testament informs us that Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea : The Old saith that he should be in Egypt, and called

called from thence ; the New confirms it : The Old foretold that he should have a forerunner ; the New informs us that John the Baptist was his forerunner : The Old told that he would work miracles ; the New proves that Jesus did so : The Old declared that he would be despised and rejected by men ; the New tells us that his soul was exceeding sorrowful, and that he had no place where to lay his blessed head : In the Old we are warned that he was to be numbered among the transgressors ; in the New we are informed that he was crucified betwixt two malefactors : In the Old it was pointed out that he would be laid in the grave, and that he would rise again ; in the New we read that he rose from the dead on the third day. The Angels declared it. Many saw him. Two of the disciples walked with him to Emaus. St Thomas thrust his hand into his side, and found him to be flesh and blood. He was seen of five hundred brethren at once. In the Old we read that he was to ascend on high, to lead captivity captive, and to receive gifts for men ; in the New we are told that he was received up
into

into heaven, and that he sat down on the right hand of God, and gave gifts unto men, enabling them to work miracles, and heal all manner of diseases; and still he continues to give the benefits of grace and salvation to his real disciples. He was also seen by Paul and Stephen in glory; and O how delightful must it be to see him, who bled on the cross, shining on the throne!

Thus, through the tender mercy of our God, the Day Spring from on high hath visited us; the Sun of Righteousness hath appeared in the firmament of Zion, and scattered his salubrious rays over the Christian world. But,

Secondly; Christianity excels the Old Testament dispensation, so far as we have a more perfect revelation. The Jewish church of God had obscure expressions in types and metaphors; they had the shadow, we have the substance; they had the rudiments, we have the system of gospel truth completed; they had a few things made known unto them, but we have the whole council of God which concerns our salvation manifested. They, indeed, had the
gospel,

gospel, but it was wrapped up in clouds and thick darkness; but we have it clear as bright shining day. The old mysterious hieroglyphics are now explained; life and immortality are clearly brought to light by the gospel. No doubt some, under the Old Testament dispensation, as some have under the New, had clearer views of the truth than others.

Thirdly; Christianity excels the Old Testament dispensation, in as much as there is a more abundant effusion of the Spirit of God. We find him in the Old Testament promised to be poured on the church, as water from the clouds, as rivers in their channels, and as an overflowing flood. "I will pour out my Spirit, says God, upon all flesh; even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee;" which day means the gospel dispensation: As if it had been said, "I will not only give you my Son to redeem you, but my Spirit to sanctify and comfort you: For I will pour out my Spirit upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my
" blessing

“ blessing upon thine offspring.” When Jesus Christ had finished man’s salvation, as to merit, and ascended to heaven, agreeable to the above, and similar promises, on the day of Pentecost, the Spirit was poured down in a most extraordinary manner on the disciples ; in virtue of which they went through the world preaching the glad tidings of salvation ; working miracles to confirm men in the faith of Christ. The Spirit gives a more distinct knowledge of the things of God and Christ, under the Christian dispensation, than was communicated under the Old Testament times. So it was foretold, by the prophet Jeremiah, “ That “ they shall all know God, from the least of “ them unto the greatest of them.” The Spirit now takes of the things of Christ, and shews them unto the people of God, and glorifies our Saviour. He gradually restores the image of God unto their souls, and leads them forth into acts of holiness and virtue. He begins the good work in their souls, and carries it on to the day of complete deliverance from all sin, and from its fearful consequences. But, in the

Fourth

Fourth place; Christianity excels the Old Testament dispensation, as it has delivered us from the observance of a multitude of rites and ceremonies, which were a heavy yoke upon the Jews. What washings, what sprinklings, what purifications, had they to undergo? And, when clean, what danger were they under by night and day, at home and abroad, of being again defiled? They were forced to watch continually against being polluted. What innumerable ceremonies belonged to the service of the temple? What journies to and from this place of worship, from the one end of the land to the other? What sacrifices and offerings had they to make? How much more excellent is the gospel dispensation? In it we have only two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper. These ordinances of the New Testament are much more easy than those of the Old. To sprinkle with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; to eat a little bread and drink a little wine at the table of the Lord, are observances free of bondage, and are attended with few inconveniencies and little expence. But the

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Mosaic rites were exceedingly expensive and burdensome ; and the dispensations of Adam and Noah, with their continual sacrifices, were costly, bloody, and painful. The ordinances of the gospel, however, and chiefly baptism and the Lord's Supper, represent the covenant of grace and its blessings more clearly than any which were observed before them. When our bodies are sprinkled or washed with water in the ordinance of baptism, this plainly represents that our souls must pass through the laver of regeneration, or that we must have the Spirit to wash us from all filthiness of the flesh, and of the mind. The bread broken, and the wine poured out, in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, distinctly represent the body of Christ broken on the cross for our sins, and his blood poured out as an ever atoning sacrifice ; and the actions, eating and drinking, evidently hold forth our participation of the benefits which he purchased for his people. This holy ordinance also confirms the covenant which God hath made with us through his Son, by our hearty consent thereto, which is manifested
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by our eating and drinking, in his presence, at his own Table. O then ye members of Christ's mystical body, go to morrow, in the strength of the Lord, to his Table, and partake of this holy ordinance, with suitable dispositions of heart*.

In the fifth place; Christianity excels the Old Testament dispensation, as it extends to Gentiles as well as Jews. The former is spread for all nations; the latter was confined to the Jews. The words of the Eternal God to a glorified Messiah are continually fulfilling. "Ask of me, and I shall
"give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth
"for thy possession. I will also give thee
"for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the
"earth." St Paul, by the Spirit of God, in the second chapter of the epistle addressed unto the Ephesians, in an elegant manner describes the amazing goodness and wisdom of God, in extending the gospel to the Gentiles, and disposing their hearts to embrace the same. And, indeed, who can but stand
amazed

* Preached on a Saturday before the Communion.

amazed at such a surprising alteration in the conduct of the Gentiles, who have believed the record of God concerning his Son? To see those who, from their youth, paid honour and worship to stocks and stones, devils, ravenous beasts, venomous reptiles, fire, earth, and to the sun of the firmament; paying devout worship to the Most High, is truly a great and wonderful alteration of conduct: And this very circumstance assures us, that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah, and that it is in vain for the Jews to look for another, by whose Word and Spirit, and Ministry, such an astonishing work was accomplished; such a change of manners was never seen nor heard of by ancient ages; and, when we attend to the human instruments made use of by God, in bringing the Gentiles to acknowledgment of himself, our admiration must increase. Poor fishermen, and Paul a poor despised tent-maker, who were denied to worldly wisdom, who were furnished with none of the captivating charms of Roman or Greek eloquence, nor supported by human power. The legions of hell raged against the doctrines which
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those Apostles taught; the lords of the earth opposed and combined against them; the schools of philosophers exclaimed against them; and yet, in spite of all possible opposition from men and devils, the gospel triumphs, and, with admirable swiftness, spreads among the children of men, was considerably propagated on both sides of the equator; and its fame went through all the earth. So the Great Apostle of the Gentiles thanks the Almighty in behalf of the Romans, that their faith was spoken of through the whole world. But

The gospel did not so spread among the nations, until it was rejected by the greater number of the Jewish nation. Jesus Christ came unto his own relations, and the peculiar people of God; but they received him not as the true Messiah, they treated him as the worst of malefactors. Jesus knew that this would be his fate amongst them from the beginning. He knows the hearts of all men, and is acquainted with all future events. He pointed out how the Jews would treat him and his followers, in that most simple and beautiful parable, which is recorded

ed in the 21st chapter of the gospel according to Mathew. "There was a certain
"householder which planted a vineyard
"and hedged it round about, and digg-
"ed a wine-press in it, and built a tower,
"and let it out to husbandmen, and went
"into a far country ; and, when the time
"of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants
"to the husbandmen that they might receive
"the fruit of it. And the husbandmen took
"his servants, and beat one, and killed another,
"and stoned another. Again, he sent
"other servants more than the first, and
"they did unto them likewise. But last of
"all he sent unto them his son, saying they
"will reverence my son. But, when the
"husbandmen saw the son, they said among
"themselves, this is the heir, come let us
"kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.
"And they caught him, and cast him out
"of the vineyard, and slew him. When
"the lord, therefore, of the vineyard cometh,
"What will he do unto those husbandmen ?
"They say unto him, he will miserably
"destroy those wicked men, and will let
"out his vineyard unto other husbandmen,
"which

“ which shall render unto him the fruits in
“ their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, did
“ ye never read in the scriptures the stone
“ which the builders rejected ? The same
“ is become the head of the corner ; this is
“ the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in
“ our eyes : Therefore, say I unto you, the
“ kingdom of God shall be taken from you,
“ and given to a nation bringing forth the
“ fruits thereof.”

The gospel of the kingdom of God was first preached to the Jews ; but they rejected it, and lo the servants of God turned, by his commandment, unto the Gentiles. The Jews were spared until other nations received the word, and then they were cut off as a nation, and the greater number of them destroyed by war and famine. They were without excuse for their unbelief, especially when they continued in it after the spread of the gospel. They saw the light of the gospel, like the light of heaven, shining through the world, yet they shut the eyes of their minds, and would not believe in Jesus whom they had crucified. By the spread of the gospel also among the other nations,

nations, God informed mankind of the blood-guiltiness of the Jews before he cut them off, and shewed the inhabitants of the earth that he punished them in righteousness; and this procedure of his was a declaration to other nations, that, if they would abuse his goodness, he would assuredly punish them likewise. So our Blessed Redeemer foretold, and said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." So God did not destroy the temple at Jerusalem, nor the Jewish nation, until he established the spiritual temple and heavenly kingdom of the Messiah.

Further, Christianity excels the Old Testament dispensation, in respect of the more manifest liberty which the saints enjoy. Now there is a liberty, common to believers, in every age of the Christian world. This common liberty, in the *first place*, partly consists in freedom from the tyranny of the devil. We have heard much, for some time past, of the tyranny of earthly kings and human governments, and of many struggling to be delivered from their oppression and cruelty :

cruelty : We do not say that there are no kings and governments tyrannical, but none of them are more so than the devil. This cunning arch foe of the human race has usurped a government over their hearts and actions, to which he has no right : By deceit and infernal malignity he acquired it, and he keeps it by a deceiving cruelty ; and O how few comparatively are struggling to be delivered from his tyranny ! He commands his *slaves* to do wicked actions, inspires them with the hope of pleasure in the doing of them ; yet all the time he knows they are forging darts to pierce their souls through with many eternal sorrows : Having obtained their complete and everlasting destruction, it is by many conjectured that he then mocks them for their credulity, and tells them, if he had been favoured with the offers of grace and mercy from God as they were, he would not have been forever miserable. We pity the poor *slaves* in the West Indies, and in other places ; they are slaves generally against their inclination ; death will give them deliverance from the oppression of their fellow men : Their pre-

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sent condition, however, is indeed deplorable. But ah, how much more miserable are the *slaves* of satan? They are his voluntary captives; they now do not feel the misery of their condition. If, however, they continue in the slavery of the devil, the flames of hell shall soon inclose around them, and they shall mingle there with the damned, whose yells and groans, O could they now but hear, how would they desire to shun their fate! Jesus Christ, the Blessed Author of Christianity, has delivered all, who truly believe in him, from the tyranny of the devil; has rescued them from the paws of the devouring lion, and set them in a land of safety. In them he hath destroyed the works of the devil; and, by his Spirit and Grace, hath stamped on their souls his heavenly image. *Secondly*, The liberty which Christians now enjoy, partly consists in deliverance from the reigning power of sin. Over a wicked person not only does the devil reign, but sin also. The nature is totally corrupted, though the devil were annihilated, yet sin would survive, and tyrannize over the natural man. But Christ has de-
throned

throned this tyrant also from the hearts of those who believe in him; and he tells them expressly, "That sin shall not have dominion over them; for they are not under the law, but under grace." He, their rightful Sovereign, hath ascended the throne of their hearts, and shall reign over them in spite of all opposition: None shall be able to pluck them nor their affections out of his hand. *This liberty, thirdly*, wherewith Christ has made his people free, includes in it deliverance from the condemnation of the law. The sentence of it, which was gone out against them, was, that they were to be miserable in this life, and in that which is to come. Even here, "God is angry with the wicked every day;" and the wages of sin is eternal death, or wo consummate. Jesus Christ made atonement to the law and justice of God for the sins of his people, by his holy life, sufferings, and death. In proof of this, he arose from the grave, and, in due time, ascended to glory, to prepare a place for his followers; so now, "There is no condemnation to them who truly believe in Jesus Christ;" they are restored

to the favour and love of Jehovah. In this world, indeed, they have to endure tribulations, and at last death itself. The afflictions, however, which they have to bear, are the chastisements of their Heavenly Father for their transgressions, and all things work together for their real good; and death at last comes to them without a sting, puts an end to all their sufferings, and is a prelude to joys eternal. Their souls are safely conducted to the abodes of the Redeemed, and their bodies descend to the grave in the hope of a blessed resurrection: At that period they shall be set at liberty from the grave, to die no more, but to live with Christ forever and ever, enjoying increasing happiness in glory. Such is the liberty with which Christ has blessed the citizens of the Christian world, which seems once to have been confined to the Jewish nation; and even there, under a thick cloud, few knew any thing of its nature comparatively; all the then children of God, however, now enjoy it in the heavenly Canaan. Many other properties of this liberty might have been mentioned; but they all are contained in

in this, " That Christians have no absolute master, save God alone, and his service is perfect freedom." Their fellow men may acquire or assume a power over them, but they must not obey them farther than God commands, or the Court of Heaven tolerates them to yield obedience.

Again, The gospel dispensation excels the Old Testament times, as, during the gospel day, Jews and Gentiles shall be united in the faith of Christ. The downfall of the Jewish nation preceded the rise of the Christian world ; its full establishment shall bring in the ancient people of God to the communion of the church of Christ. When once the pure doctrines of the gospel are preached to all nations, the Jews, it is likely, shall be brought into the church of Christ. Soon after the introduction of Christianity, the gospel was preached purely almost to all the then known world, by the Apostles and their fellow labourers. A great part of the now inhabited, and inhabitable world, was not then known to men. The Almighty, in the course of his providence, by new discoveries, and the intercourse of nations with
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one another, is gradually preparing the whole world for the reception of his word. Much opposition, indeed, has the gospel to meet with in all nations, in some more than others, but it shall finally prevail over all. Then, when the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in, all Israel shall be saved; the whole Jews, perhaps in a body, shall turn unto the Lord, “And the vail that is upon their hearts shall be taken away. Now, if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness? For, if the casting away of the Jews be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? The children of Israel shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days.” Upon the restoration of the Jews to the favour of heaven, it is probable that the whole world shall be of one religion and government. Then Zion shall see eye to eye, when the glory of the Lord is revealed. War shall then cease; peace and universal good will shall prevail from

from pole to pole, and from the one end of the earth even to the other, *a consummation devoutly to be wished.* Hail glorious day, may thy morning soon dawn ; may thy sun soon arise, and banish bigotry, superstition, tyranny, cruelty, illiberality, and darkness, from the earth ! Hail glorious luminary, Sun of Righteousness, adorn, and fructify the moral world into a beautiful paradise for God and man ! Let thy vivifying and cheering rays cause the blossoms of holiness every where appear, that all may be holiness unto the Lord Almighty.

Once more, Christianity excels the Old Testament dispensation, in respect that it affords us brighter examples, and stronger motives, to incline us to the performance of our duty. We have the perfect example of Jesus Christ set before us for our imitation, as also of his Apostles and followers. We would do well to mark the footsteps of the Shepherd and flock, who have gone before us to glory ; and, through the grace of God, to walk as they did, in every instance in which it becomes us so to do. The motives to action, arising from love and gratitude, are powerful : Behold then what manner of love is this, which
God

see the GREAT JUDGE of the universe descending in brightness, attended with the Host of heaven: He erects in the air the dread throne of judgment; the souls of the redeemed go at his high behest, and animate their refined bodies in the grave; all glorious they arise from the same, and spring up to meet their Lord in the sky. By the order of the Judge, they take their stand on his right hand. Then the damned in hell come as a thick dark cloud from their awful abode; the lightning of Divine wrath flashes over it; the souls of the wicked, with a thousand piercing stings in each of them, come to the grave, enter their defiled bodies, and arise from the same as swine from the mire; they are conducted by the justice of God, and marshalled on the left hand of the Judge on the throne; they behold his face covered with frowns; the final sentence of the world is pronounced by Jesus Christ; the righteous are acquitted from all accusations, and invited to heaven; the wicked are condemned, and commanded to depart forever from God. The business of the Great Day being finished, the Judge and his

his company ascend to the mansions of glory ; (the wicked fondly would go with them, but the justice of God, upon account of their crimes, prevents them) ; they enter into heaven, and its gates are forever barred against the ungodly. Nature around is then on flames, and the devil and all his crew are tumbled into hell.

Thus I have endeavoured to delineate the excellency of the New Testament dispensation to that of the Old. I have now only to conclude, by exhorting you to be thankful unto God for casting your lot in a land of gospel light, and to perform the duties which are incumbent upon you.

Let your language be that of the psalmist's. " Bless the Lord, O my soul ; and
" all that is within me, bless his holy name.
" Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget
" not all his benefits ; who forgiveth all
" thine iniquities ; who healeth all thy diseases ;
" who redeemeth thy life from destruction ;
" who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies ;
" who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, so that
" thy youth is renewed like the eagles."

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Ye are highly favoured of the Lord ; ye see and enjoy the day which many great and good men would have rejoiced to see and enjoy ; they saw it by faith afar off ; they were glad in the contemplation of it. “ As
“ you have the light of the Sun of Righteousness, work out your salvation with
“ fear and trembling ; for it is God who
“ worketh in you both to will and to do of
“ his good pleasure ; for how shall you
“ escape, if ye neglect so great salvation ?
“ Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly,
“ with thy God.” Come to morrow to the Table of the Lord with suitable dispositions of mind ; be sorry for your sins, which crucified the Lord of glory ; resolve through grace to forsake them all ; love the Lord Jesus Christ with all your heart, with all your might, with all your strength, who loved you to such a degree as to give his life for you ! This do therefore in remembrance of him. Love one another ; love even your enemies ; pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you ; do good unto all men, but especially to the household of faith ; and so imitate your Father who

who is in heaven, who causeth the sun to shine, and the rain to fall, on the just and the unjust. Perhaps there are some of you in darkness, and are hesitating whether ye will join or not, on this occasion, in the communion. For your comfort and instruction, consider that Jesus, the Mediator of the better Testament, the Author of the new dispensation, is appointed by the Father to give light to them that sit in darkness, to open the blind eyes, and to bring out the prisoners from the prison. Turn you then to your strong hold, ye prisoners of hope. Come unto Christ, by believing in him, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and he will give you sweet rest. Take his yoke upon you, and learn of him; for he is meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For his yoke is easy, and his burden is light.

SER-

S E R M O N . III.

Judges xiii. 6.—*Say now Shibboleth, and he said Sibboleth, for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him and slew him at the passages of Jordan; and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand.*

THE children of Israel were protected by God, so long as they adhered to him, and obeyed his commandments: but, when they departed from him and transgressed his law, he delivered them over into the hands of their enemies. Though they would not perceive the worth of Jephthah, in the day of prosperity and triumph, they were made to see it in the time of adversity and defeat: When the children of Ammon had invaded their land, and none among themselves could

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be found to conduct the war, and oppose the common enemy, they were then glad to apply to Jephthah, whom they had unjustly expelled from his father's house, who was persuaded, by their intreaties and promises, to become again their head and defender. He, like a man who feared God, and regarded the life of his fellow creatures, would not shed a drop of human blood, till every mean of reconciliation failed. He sent ambassadors again and again to the children of Ammon, to endeavour, by all possible means, to establish peace, but in vain. Therefore he commenced the war, agreeable to the laws of nature and revelation, for both warrant self defence. Kingdoms and nations going to war in such a lawful manner may expect the aid of heaven; their heads to be covered in the day of battle, and at last victory complete. But otherwise, nothing but the frowns of heaven, confusion, and marked disgrace. As you see in the history before us, no sooner are the children of Ammon overcome by the wise Jephthah, than, strange to tell, the men of Ephraim unjustly commence hostilities against him, and threaten

ten to lay this hero's house in ashes. Ungrateful and foolish conduct ! But God was with this man of valour, and crowned him with victory over his enemies at the passages of Jordan ; " and there fell at that time of " the Ephraimites forty and two thousand." That Jephthah might not slay any but his enemies, he fixes upon a mark by which they would be known. The Ephraimites could not pronounce the word Shibboleth, but called it Sibboleth ; all, therefore, who could not pronounce it right, were, by the Gileadites, put to death.

In the text, and the history to which it refers, ye may observe three things, the *Judge* ; the *criterion by which* the Ephraimites were known ; and the *execution* of those rebellious people. I purpose to make a few miscellaneous remarks on each of these general articles, and then to conclude the discourse.

First, Then, as to the *judge* of this affair, who was *Jephthah*, he was a great and a good man, and is a canonized saint, by the Spirit of God, in the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews ; and his name is handed down to

to succeeding generations, with the renown of the approbation of the Almighty. He may be considered as a figure of Christ, who was then to come, but who is now come in the flesh. His name, *Jephthab*, signifies to open ; so Jesus Christ opened the designs of heaven which concern man's salvation ; he hath opened the hearts of his people, and the grave the prison of sin ; nay, by his own power, he opened the grave in which, after his crucifixion, he was laid, and ascended up into glory ; and hath cast the gates of heaven wide open for the reception of his followers. *Jephthab* was expelled from his father's house by his brethren, and fled to the land of Tob. " So Jesus came unto his own, and his own " received him not ; fled to Egypt, but at " last they crucified him." *Jephthab*, when his brethren were destitute of a warrior and deliverer, he became their successful defender. So Jesus Christ, when none in heaven nor earth could save the human race but himself, he undertook their cause, and came to this world for to deliver them from misery. He became the Captain of our sal-

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vation ;

vation; and was made perfect through sufferings. He became the head of his body the church; and daily he conducts many of his people to glory. *Jephthab* offered terms of peace to his enemies before he proceeded to carry on war against them. So Jesus Christ offers to guilty sinners, again and again, terms of reconciliation before he punishes them for their transgressions; he calls upon them to repent, to turn from their sins unto the Lord; but, if they finally refuse to hearken to his counsel, he punishes them, by banishing them from the favour of God; and allowing them to reap the fruit of their own doings in hell. *Jephthab* was victorious over his enemies, he completely defeated them. So Jesus Christ obtained a complete victory over all his enemies, that they shall never be able to rally successfully against him. He hath conquered death, and him who had the power of death. Jesus is victorious King of Zion for ever more. "His
" name for ever shall endure: And
" men shall be blessed in him; all nations
" shall call him blessed. Blessed be the
" Lord

“ Lord God, the God of Israel, who only
“ doeth wonderous things ; and blessed be
“ his glorious name forever ; and let the
“ whole earth be filled with his glory.”

Secondly, As to the *criterion*, by which the Ephraimites were known at the passages of Jordan, viz. their *provincial dialect*, they could not pronounce the Hebrew language as the Gileadites spoke it. It was then as it is now, the same language spoken differently, even in the same kingdoms ; and also the very same word has different meanings ; as here, the word *Shibboleth* (which is pure Hebrew, though written in our translation of the bible in Roman characters,) signifies both fruitful *ears of corn*, and *floods of water* ; and, as used in the text, it perhaps imported as much as any of you would say at the side of a river to persons opposing you, “ Let me go through the water.” But the *Ephraimites* could not pronounce it right in the opinion of the Gileadites, and so gave evidence to whom *they* belonged. When they could not say *Shibboleth*, they were not spared to tell tidings, nor to learn how to pronounce it, but were slain accordingly.

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The Gileadites and their head, Jephthah, being successful, and the best men also, as, likewise, having a just cause for going to war: And the Ephraimites having a bad cause, and being overcome and dreadfully slaughtered at the passages of Jordan: We may, for the sake of instruction, consider the first as pointing out the righteous, and the latter the wicked: And so pass from the literal history, and proceed to contemplate the difference betwixt the truly religious and the hypocrite, or mere *nominal* professor of religion. Here the goats are among the sheep, the chaff among the corn, and the tares among the wheat, and shall continue so till the general harvest or the end of the world. But, in the mean time, the Lord knows them who are his people; and, at last, he shall separate them for ever from the company of the ungodly crew of vicious sinners. O how like to one another were the Gileadites and the Ephraimites, but how different in their real dispositions! So the hypocrite in his external appearance is very like the children of God, so like to them that often they cannot distinguish him from

from one of themselves: but their Lord knows him, for he sees clearly his heart. The following observations, however, contain some of the features of the hypocrite's character; your own consciences can best tell you whether these features are in any of yourselves.

The hypocrite, or the mere formalist, may address God in a loud and long harangue like the Pharisee, and, with seeming fervour, as Esau did to his father; he may cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with crying out; but, notwithstanding, he is a stranger to the prayer of faith and to real religion. The Spirit of God takes no part in his exercises, because he has not a single eye to his glory, nor has any pleasure in religion; but the real Christian prays earnestly and constantly in faith, being assisted by the Holy Ghost; he draws near to God, in the name of Christ, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having his heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and his body washed with pure water, and has real pleasure in the exercise. The hypocrite may fast twice a week, but he

he does it for himself, and not to obtain the approbation of God through Christ ; he so does to carry on his own wicked schemes under a holy vail ; he fasts for strife and debate, and to smite his neighbour with the fist of wickedness ; but the real Christian embraces every proper opportunity to bewail his transgression before the Lord, both in private and in public ; he has not only the appearance of contrition for his iniquities, but the reality of repentance also is felt in his heart, and it is visible in his conversation ; his language is, to his sins and companions, “ Depart from me ye evil doers, “ for I am determined to keep the commandments of my God ;” and this is no vain ostentation, but the genuine and fixed sentiment of his soul. The hypocrite makes a great noise about religion, but he has no saving knowledge in it ; he is like a parrot, crying, “ God bless me,” when it understands not the meaning of the saying ; but the real Christian shews his religion, more by becoming actions, than noise about it ; he hath both the reality of it, and the modest appearance of the same. The hypocrite

pocrite may be astonished at Christ's doctrines and his example, and his commandments, for many followed him during the days of his humanity, and exclaimed, "Never man spake like this man;" yet they were not a whit better of his teaching, because they loved sin, and would not quit with their vices. The mere formalist in religion may seem to himself and others to have his affections awakened to goodness; he may have a legal sorrow for sin, and say, like Saul, "I have sinned; behold I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly; but this proceeds only from the dread of punishment; and so fears God as the slave does the tyrant. But the real Christian mourns, because, by his sins, which are contrary to the nature and law of God, he hath offended the Almighty. Fear to offend God is the beginning of wisdom; this fear in the Christian is coeval with his being born again, or made a new creature in Christ Jesus.

The *hypocrite* may have a kind of zeal for religion, like Saul before his conversion, who was exceedingly zealous of the traditions of
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the fathers; *his zeal*; however, proceeds from malice, ignorance, and from self interest. But the real disciple of Jesus is zealous for the truth, and of good works; contends for the faith once delivered unto the saints. The mere formalist, also in religion, may, like Balaam, desire and hope for happiness, but loves the wages of unrighteousness, and despises the way which leads to it; but the sincere child of God only desires and hopes to find happiness in the way which he hath appointed to lead to the enjoyment of felicity; he shall obtain heaven, and joys immortal; while the hope and joy, and happiness, of the hypocrite, having their foundation in the sand, shall fade away, and forever fly from him. Appearances of religion, without its reality, shall avail you nothing in the great day of trial. Alas! there are many who shall feel this to their sad experience; for there are many blossoms of holiness in professors, and comparatively little fruit; many prayers are made to God; few answers given to them, because they are not put up in faith; many are crying
Lord,

Lord, Lord, who do not His commandments ; many are hearers of the word, few receivers of it comparatively considered. The true criterion which distinguishes the saint from the hypocrite, is good works, or the fruits of holiness. There is a principle of grace in the soul of the saint, the word of God is in him as a well of living water springing up to eternal life. By his fruit he is known : as on the golden candlestick in the temple there were beautiful ornaments, so the Christian has the flowers of grace, and the fruits of good works, for his decorations. Grace in the heart has the same connexion with good works, which roots in the ground have with the plants, vegetables, and trees, which grow from them. Every one that hath the true hope of salvation in his soul endeavours through grace to purify himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. For " Jesus came to " save His people from their sins ; " from the pollution, and reigning power of their sins, as well as the punishment of them.

Now as to the execution which took place at the passages of Jordan, we may

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consider

consider it, as pointing out the dreadful vengeance, which shall at last be taken on wilful and impenitent sinners. *Jephthah* was the commanding General at this slaughter, and *Judge* of the business: The Ephraimites, both from God and him justly deserved their fate. But if *Jephthah* was not under the necessity of slaying them by the immediate commandment of God or some other circumstance, it would still have farther enriched his character to have spared as many of their lives as possible: but God's providence directed the affair otherwise, and just and wise are all His Judgments: and *Jephthah* in this matter is at least blameless. The River Jordan where this tragedy was acted, is situated in Judea now called Turkey in Asia, it springs from Mount Libanus, and runs through the country for above an hundred and fifty miles, forming several lakes as it rolls along, and then discharges itself into the dead sea. It may be viewed as an emblem of death, especially taking it in connexion with the history to which the text refers. Death is that awful flood which has its source in guilt, rolls over the moral world,

world, carrying all creatures with it, the righteous however get safe, through this mighty torrent to the Heavenly Canaan, but the wicked are carried with its force to the fiery sea of hell; and O how many lift up their eyes there day and night! Many who have laid themselves down on their beds in good health, have slept, and their spirits awaked in hell;—many who in the morning have arisen from their repose, ere the setting sun have closed their eyes on this world, and lifted them up there in utter misery! As *Jephthab* was *Judge* at the passages of Jordan, so Jesus is *Judge* at death and the last day; all Judgment is committed to Him, and the time of it is fixed; all must appear before Him twice, viz. at death, and the general Judgment. His omniscient eye is upon you all at present, and his Judgment is formed concerning you, and intimated to you in the word; the gospel which I preach unto you, by its laws, Jesus shall Judge you at the last day: Many of you do not now attend to the intimation which is made to you in the word; but when the same is pronounced against you
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by the Judge at the passages of Jordan, it shall thrill your souls, and wound your hearts. The great Judge from His white throne shall pronounce your final doom, which you cannot avoid, nor any reverse : The sentence will be the very same which in His word He hath already formed concerning you and your works. If you come to the passages of Jordan as corn fully ripe, Jesus will Judge you over to the Heavenly Canaan. According to the bible in your hands, and the gospel sounding in your ears, He shall give you from all your enemies and all evil, complete deliverance. Those who are faithful unto Christ even unto the death, He will appoint unto them a kingdom ; they shall eat of the fruit of the tree of life in the paradise of God. “ Then the King
“ shall say unto them on His right hand,
“ Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit
“ the Kingdom prepared for you from the
“ foundation of the world.”

But on the other hand, if you have not the genuine dispositions of God's people, when you come to the passages of Jordan, it shall, as already said, carry you down its
torrent

torrent to the dreadful sea of hell. "Except
"a man be born again, he cannot see the
"kingdom of God. He that believeth not
"in Jesus Christ is condemned already, and
"the wrath of God abideth on him: The
"unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom
"of God. The unprofitable servant shall
"be cast into utter darkness: there shall be
"weeping and gnashing of teeth." All
who are not Christians indeed shall meet
with the second death at the passages of
Jordan. For the great judge saith, Those
mine enemies, who would not that I
should reign over them, bring hither and
slay them before me. He hath drawn
His sword and shall bathe it in the blood
of His implacable enemies. Behold Him
standing before you at the passages of Jor-
dan giving commandment to His Angels to
slay all the ungodly.

Ye are all approaching to death, and shall
soon meet with it. Endeavour therefore
through grace to prepare for your latter
end. Be assured no hypocritical trimming,
no language, but the genuine language of Ca-
naan, shall avail you when you come to the
passages

passages of Jordan ; if you cannot speak the language of Canaan ye must be slain ! Be humble, and mindful of death and judgment. Humility is at the foundation of all the graces of the Spirit of God. “ Blessed “ are the poor in spirit for theirs is the “ kingdom of heaven.” The Devil is the king of all the children of pride ; But Jesus Christ is the Governor of the meek and lowly. Pride was the impelling cause which raised the Ephraimites in rebellion against Jephthah ; behold ! how they were destroyed. The humble, God will exalt, but the proud, He shall bring low. As the vallies are often fruitful in corn and verdure, when the lofty mountains are covered with snow, so the humble abound in good works, when the proud are devoid of them. As the violet is more savoury than the gaudy tulip, so the humble are far more precious than the proud and high minded : the humble, God beholds with a pleasant countenance, with the proud he is angry every day. “ Examine yourselves, “ prove yourselves, know ye not, that except the Spirit of Christ dwell in you, ye “ are

“are reprobates? For if any man has not
“the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.
“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and ye
“shall be saved.” Believe in the merits of
His blood as all-sufficient to wash you from
all defilement; believe in His righteousness
as all-sufficient to justify you before God,
from all accusations. And when Jordan
overflows its banks, it shall only gently sweep
you over to the celestial Canaan.

S E R -

S E R M O N IV.

Revelation iv. 6.—And before the throne there was a sea of Glass like unto Cbrystal.

THIS book contains a short, but true history, of the fate of the church, until the end of time. The events which have already befallen her, and others, which have not yet taken place, were in St John's view, the Penman of this Revelation, acted over by the Angels of Heaven. His deepest attention was most solemnly demanded, to this scene, as by the sound of a trumpet, saying, "Come up hither and I will shew you the things which must be hereafter." The visions with which he was favoured, represented the sufferings of the righteous and their happy termination; as also, the prosperity of the wicked in this world and their

their final overthrow. The scope, of this chapter in particular, is to set forth the majesty of the eternal God as the Governor of the Universe; and the everlasting happiness of His people.

In the sequel of the discourse, I intend *first*, to speak a little of the throne mentioned in my text, and described in this chapter; *secondly*, of the sea of glass clear as chrystal, which is said to be before this throne; then to conclude with some improvement.

As to the first; A throne, signifies a magnificent seat on which Princes frequently sit to receive the homage of their subjects and attendants, to give audience to ambassadors, and power to their deputies to execute justice through their kingdoms. Heaven is said to be God's throne, and the earth His footstool. Jerusalem is called also the throne "of the Lord;" Jer. iii. 17. which is expressive of His absolute dominion over churches, states, and kingdoms: "For He ruleth in Jacob unto the very ends of the earth." And this dignified appellation was bestowed upon Jerusalem, it is likely, because, there, in the most holy place of the

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temple,

temple, was the Ark of the Covenant, where God did dwell between the cherubims, shining forth gloriously, filling the consecrated dome, with His brightness: Not that His presence was confined to this place, or His full glory there displayed; but that he manifested Himself in an eminent manner to His chosen Israelites: They were favoured with the Ark, and the Divine *Shechinah*, until, upon account of their transgressions, the Almighty withdrew His *special* presence from them; and then the Ark was taken from them: So that *Ichabod* (the glory departed) was the universal motto throughout the country of the Hebrews. As the temple was the palace of Jehovah, and the mercy seat His throne, so He is now in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself: The fulness of the Godhead dwells in our Saviour: He is therefore mighty and able to save all who come unto God through His merits. Christ hath covered the sins of His people with His perfect righteousness, (as the mercy seat covered the Ark of the Covenant); and His blood and spirit wash them from the defilement of their iniquities. As the
Ark

Ark had its place by God's authority alternately as occasion required, in the temple, and tabernacle, so Jesus Christ, who is both the throne of Grace, and the Prince of peace, was set in the visible church at His incarnation or birth ; hence " He is called the true " tabernacle which the Lord pitched and " not man : " He was invested with His public office by a divine patent ; " Him " hath God the Father sealed and set Him " King upon his holy hill of Zion . " After the Ark had served God's end in the tabernacle, it was brought into the temple on Mount Zion ; so Christ having finished the work, which the Father gave him to do on earth, was received up into glory, and set down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens.

Now, although, as above stated, Jesus may be considered as the throne of grace in which Jehovah himself dwells, and from this throne God designs to speak to the children of men ; and although, that the Divine Majesty of the universe cannot be contained on any material throne absolutely considered, nor even so in the body of Christ, which is material ;

terial; and hence from the nature of things must occupy space: As He is the God-Man, the King of Zion, the Governor of the universe, I cannot see, why we may not from scripture and reason infer that there is a local heaven of happiness, and that in this heaven there is a material throne glorious and beautiful, beyond all description, on which Christ sits advocating with his father the cause of his people upon earth: Though advocates on earth sit not on the throne of judgment beside the judge or judges when pleading for their clients, this is no argument against the doctrine here hinted at, for their office bears little comparison to the exalted employment of Christ. He is equal in dignity with God the Father, and is the great judge of the world. Isaiah, tells us in the vi. Chapter of his prophecies, "That
" he saw the Lord sitting upon a throne,
" high and lifted up, and his train filled the
" temple." And our Saviour himself says,
" If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw
" all men unto me." The last verse is generally understood, as if our Saviour had said, " If I be lifted up on the cross, and my
" doctrines

“doctrines spread among men, I will draw
“all men for whom I died unto me.” The
interpretation is just so far as it goes, but
the passage includes also his ascension to the
throne of glory in heaven, to that throne
which Isaiah saw high, and lifted up. And
from that throne he says unto us by his
word, “To him that overcometh will I
“grant to sit with me in my throne, even
“as I also overcome, and am set down with
“my Father in his throne.” Many other
passages might be brought forward to sup-
port the doctrine here hinted at; which
doctrine no person can disprove. So it is
from scripture and reason highly probable,
that Christ sits on a glorious, material throne,
surrounded with the hosts of heaven, and
his train, (the perfections of his nature), fills
every soul with homage and adoration, and
the heavenly temple with glory.

This Throne in heaven, is not only filled
with the human nature of Christ, but also
in union with it, the Divine eternal reigns.
So in the fifth chapter of this same book, we
are told, That the Son came and took the
book out of the right hand of him that sat
upon

upon the throne: And the appearance of him who sat thereon was to look "upon like a jasper, and a sardine stone: And "there was a rainbow round about the "throne, in sight like unto an emerald."

Many are of opinion that these three precious stones here mentioned, represent the glorious trinity. The *Jasper* is the mother of pearl, and of very beautiful colours; it was one of the ornaments in Aron's breastplate; and is said to be a preservative against the most noxious poisons; which may bring into our minds the spotless purity of God, His manifold excellencies which never wax old, and the riches of His grace which heals our souls from the stings of the Old Serpent. The *Sardine* stone is valuable and of a bloody complexion, was also in Aron's breastplate and in the foundation of the New Jerusalem. It is unto us an emblem of God's justice, and of the sufferings of Christ: God will by no means clear the guilty; without the shedding of blood there was no remission of sin. Around this throne there is, a canopy of state, a rainbow, to behold in hue like an emerald stone, which is extremely beautiful,

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As the natural rainbow in the cloud was to Noah and his family, and is so still to men, a security, that God will not again destroy the world with a flood, so around the throne of God in heaven, there is a rainbow, a token of the faithfulness of God, and the stability of the Covenant of Grace; thereby giving the people of God, the most ample security, That His wrath as a stream of brimstone shall never overwhelm or destroy an elect world. There is access from the four winds of heaven to him that sits upon the throne. "They shall come from the east and the west, the north and from the south, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." Angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, are his attendants on his throne; they with alacrity obey his high behests. And from his throne proceed thunderings and lightnings; these in their natural elements are formed by God, and are obedient to his will. His ministers of religion are clothed in spiritual thunder and lightning from his throne, and they are commanded to display to sinners the terrors of the Lord:

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They are also invested with power to publish the glad tidings of peace and salvation : To Saints, they are as the moon, in a serene shining night, reflecting the light of the Sun of Righteousness: To sinners as thunder and lightning in an awful storm ; displaying to them the curses of a broken law. Tremendous then is the throne of God to sinners ! And O how solemn and majestic is it to the Redeemed ! Even Moses, when he received the law from God, quaked, being filled with terror, when he saw a portion of the glory of God. Were his throne in the heavens displayed in our view, the light of the sun would be darkness when compared to its glory : For God is light, and in him is no darkness: He dwells in light transcendently glorious. Let us then be afraid to offend this *Great Majesty* of the universe : In his favour, life and perfect happiness are contained : His frowns are worse than death, they convey misery to all who are under them. But I now proceed,

Secondly; To speak of the sea of glass like unto chrystal before the throne. This language is very metaphorical. That there is a material

terial throne in heaven as above hinted at conveys to the mind nothing inconsistent with scripture nor reason ; but a sea of glass clear as chrystal before that throne, is language, not reduceable to literal fact. This however is no solid argument against the doctrine of a material throne. The sea of glass, here mentioned, as before the throne, has an allusion to the brazen laver in the tabernacle, and the molten sea in the temple made of the said substance, but the latter in a most elegant and magnificent manner. Water was poured into them for washing the Priests hands and feet, for sanctifying them for their office : The molten sea and the lavers, pointed out Christ and the efficacy of his blood in washing away the defilement of sin from his people. It was not the water in the laver which purified but what was signified by it. “ Jesus was the slain Lamb of God from the foundation of the world.” His blood was exhibited (though not so clearly) in the Old Testament dispensation as well as in the ordinances of the New. God has promised “ to cast the sins of his people into the deeps of the sea, viz. into the deeps of Christ’s

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blood

blood, to make them white as "wool and snow." Ye Kings and Priests in Zion, wash in this sea of glass before the throne : whatever ye are now, ye were once, altogether filthy, from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet ; abominable, and loathsome. But blessed be God, that this sea of glass before his throne cleanseth from all sin ; "the blood of the Son of God cleanseth from all sin." This sea is the fountain "opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." The infinite dignity thereof, makes it efficacious for this end : It is the blood of God : "Feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." The spirit of God applies this blood unto the souls of his children. Nay the spirit is in this blood, and communicates life to their hearts : "It is the spirit that quickeneth" those who are dead in trespasses and sins, and all who shall be saved. O sinner, life, real life to your soul may be found in the blood of Christ ! This sea of glass will make you all fair, and remove every spot from you : It will purge your conscience from dead

dead works to serve the living God. Now we may consider the beautiful and emphatical appellations here given unto the blood of Christ : It is called "a sea of glass clear as chrystal before the throne."

These designations, and its position, may denote the following things. First, the sufferings of Christ are a true mirror for representing unto us sin in all its deformity. They who see little, or no evil in sin, I would advise them to look to Christ at Gethsemane, and on the cross ; and then to ask their consciences, what mean these His bloody and awful sufferings ? He did no evil, no guile was found in Him ; even his judge found no fault in Him : Surely God would not have permitted such complicated sorrows to seize His only begotten Son for no purpose ; " He the just *so* suffered, for the " unjust, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Behold then in the sea of glass, the evil nature of sin, and learn to avoid the ways of iniquity. When Christ as substitute so suffered, what shall become of those who trample upon his merits, live in sin, and despise the salvation offered them by the Gospel ?

Secondly ;

Secondly ; The designations under our consideration, may imply the immaculate purity of the blood of Christ. It is clear in point of purity as chrystal : It is purity itself : the finest chrystal when compared to it is full of spots : the brightest shining diamonds when compared to the sea of glass cease to sparkle : the purest mountains of snow when contrasted with it, lose their complexion : It is incorruptible ; takes away pollution from the soul, and yet defilement will not mingle in it.

Further ; It is called a sea, perhaps to denote its all sufficiency to save, to the very uttermost, all who come unto God, through its merits. It is a full sea of salvation flowing from the Ocean of God's love ; and none by faith ever yet embarked on this sea but reached the heavenly Canaan. Here no devouring billow swells ; no tempest blows ; but the gentle gale of the spirit wafts all upon it, safe to their desired home ! But it is called a sea of glass, clear as chrystal, to point out God's complacency with all who are in Christ. As when the heavens are
calm,

calm, the element the sea, appears almost like glass clear as chrystal, reflecting the serenity of the sky : So the merits and blood of Jesus reflect the love, mercy, justice, and and truth of God, harmoniously shining from his throne upon man. Now further, as to the position of this sea of glass, it is said to be before his throne : It is the water of life flowing from his throne, to lead all the people of God to the abode of holiness in glory. Before any of the human race come to sit with Christ on his throne, they must come through the sea of glass before it. There is no back way to this throne : no way but by this sea before it. When we worship God, we must bathe in the sea of glass to purify us for the service. This sea extends from heaven to earth ; at the Port of faith in Christ, there, we embark for the New Jerusalem above, and shall in due time have a happy landing. I now proceed to apply this subject.

And professing christians, allow me to ask you, have ye been washed in the sea of glass which is before the throne ? O put the said question seriously to your own consciences.

consciences. If ye have been washed in this sea, then ye are clean in every part, though not so perfectly. "If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The new creature is washed from the gross pollution of the outward man, and is delivered from the reigning power of sin in the soul. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity nor sworn deceitfully. The new creature has found in his experience, that the sea of glass is mingled with fire: For the blood of Christ, and the Holy Ghost, always go together: He as a fire burns the corruption of the old man; and kindles a flame of love in the soul to God and holiness. The new creature, or he who is washed in the sea of glass, depends not upon his own righteousness for acceptance with God, but upon the perfect obedience of the Redeemer. Are ye then so washed in the sea which is before the throne? There are many

many of the real children of God who cannot positively answer the question. For the comfort of poor trembling believers, let them consider, though their sins be more in number than the hairs of their heads, here is a Sea, here is an Ocean for their purification: "Though their sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Blessed are they who mourn for their sins: for they shall be comforted: the sea of glass will cleanse them from all pollution.

But O wilful and impenitent sinner, what shall become of thee? If you continue in your present unhallowed state, the ocean of fire and brimstone waits for your reception. Think, O think of your danger! Without a moment's delay escape for your life, and run to the Sea of Glass for safety.

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S E R M O N V.

1 Chronicles xxviii. 9.—*And thou Selamon my son, know
thou the God of thy father—*

THIS is part of the dying charge of the king of Isreal, the best of parents, to his son, and successor in his throne and dominions. He was sensible, as all parents ought to be, that the fear of God and obedience to Him are the true ornaments of man, the glory of a family, and the safety of a state. David now under the influences of the spirit of God, and filled with thoughts of his departure, convokes an assembly of all the distinguished persons in his kingdom, and addresses them with eloquence and tenderness of soul, persuading them to promote religion, which is the happiness of nations as well as of individuals.

In the words of my text, the dying king with dignity, and weight, and tenderneſs, gives his ſon, his beſt and laſt advice. Oh ! how was the young Prince, on hearing the ſame, moved with affection to his father, gratitude to his God, and with reverence to the aſſembly ! Surely the whole audience were diſſolved in tears at the ſight of their governour, their father, teacher, and protector ; when he ſpoke of leaving them and falling aſleep in death, how then would their boſoms heave, and their eyes become rivers of waters, at the thoughts of again ſeeing their king no more ! But, in the miſt of the nobles, captains, prieſts, and elders, it was eaſy to diſtinguiſh Solomon, not only by his place and habit, but alſo by his tears and ſighs ; for the nearer the relation is, the ſtronger and greater is grief in proportion.

The doctrine contained in the text is, That it ought to be the chief and great work of parents in their life, and at their death, to recommend religion to their children. For the illucidation of this ſubject, I purpoſe, *Fiſt*, to inquire into the import of the words in the text : *Secondly* ; to deal with parents

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that they may recommend religion to their children: *Thirdly*; to persuade children to be religious: Then to make some application.

I return then to inquire into the import of the words in the text. And, in the *first place*, I observe, that this dying charge of David's to Solomon his son, is a strong proof of natural affection. In the hearts of parents, natural affection to their children is planted by the Creator, the more effectually to secure their welfare; which affection is as deeply rooted in fathers, though not so flowing and passionate as in mothers. The compassion of God over his people in their helpless state is represented by that of a father over his child, Psal. 103 13. They have not the nature of parents who harden their hearts against their children as if they were not theirs: which looks, as if God for other crimes had deprived them of wisdom, and had not imparted unto them understanding; but this charge was far from being against the dying king of Israel; he was tender and indulgent to a fault; the goodness of his disposition, the pious passions
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that were in him, and the benevolence of his heart, seemed to disarm his spirit of that severity that was due to some of his children. Can we here forget his paternal regard to ungracious Absalom, who was cut off in the act of rebellion against the best of fathers and kings; yet David broke out into the most pathetic lamentation; 2 Sam. xviii. 33. "And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and, as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" This passionate language is not to be justified, but upon the supposition it flowed from a principle of piety, as his son died in his sins, for his life would have been a plague to his father and his kingdom. But in the address of the text there is affection towards a hopeful son, directed with reason and understanding.

2dly; They import, that he had a great concern that his children should have an interest in God: this is the chief point which good men living and dying have most at heart, that their children may know,

know, fear, and serve God, for then they will have an interest in his good providence here, and be happy in his favour hereafter. By faith, illumination and argumentation, they found the present and eternal happiness or misery of their children, and its connection with their adhering to, or deserting God; and it is this foresight that filleth them with vast concern, that their children may hear God, and be hearty and steady in religion. If thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off forever. Can a parent in stronger terms express his concern for the souls of his sons, than the king of Israel doth here? He speaks, as one after God's heart; like a man who had seen the evidences and full power of religion; like a dying father whose greatest wish was to meet his son in heaven. Under this one great concern for their childrens state, should every parent live and die. O! how striking, how moving to see good men leaving the world, thus parting with their children? Had we been present, had we seen the venerable king, rising from the throne; had we heard his
last

last speech to the heads of the nation ; had we seen with what awe, but majesty, grave solemnity, and flaming zeal, he turned himself to his son ? the impressiion had been strong and everlasting.

3dly ; They import sweet reflections on God, as his God, and the God of his seed. " Thou Solomon my son, know thou the " God of thy fathers," that of Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of thy father David, my God. How noble, how grand, the sentiment of the dying king, " Know " thou, and serve the God of thy father."—Would you wish to say a greater thing to thy children on thy death bed, than, God, the eternal God, the God of heaven, has been thy father's friend, make him thine ; I have been a servant of God's, do thou never desert his service ; let not the interest thy father had in God be lost in thee. Multitudes of fathers are solicitous to keep and perpetuate estates and riches, which often prove a snare to them and their children. There are few fathers that are anxious to perpetuate a relation to God in their families, though it is the only thing worth

worth the keeping. The interest religious parents have in God, is comfortable in their last hours ; the more easily can they leave their children to the care of God ; though they know this will not secure them, without personal faithfulness. Once, indeed, did David fall into the fearful pit and miry clay ; but, by free grace and repentance, we see him standing firm on the rock of salvation, having his goings established by more security than hitherto, in the way of the Lord. And, now, upon good ground can he call God his God, and exhort his son to serve the God of his father,——

4thly ; They import, that true religion hath its foundation in knowlege. “ Know “ thou, the God of thy father ; ” know Him as Creator and Lord of the universe, and as thy Creator and Lord, who hath dominion over all his creatures, and over thee, and know him as your Judge who will call thee in before his judgment seat. It is of great consequence to young people to be impressed with a lively sense of the adorable perfections of the Deity ; this is the very essence of religion, and the basis of sincere obedience ;

sincerity

sincerity is the chief qualification of obedience, for it includes in it a desire to please God, intention to glorify him, and the practice of righteousness and kindness. As the disposition of the heart, which gives value to external works in the sight of God, is active in making the soul pray unto God, if thou seek him he will be found of thee. * A creature that believes in God, sees his derivation from him, and feels his dependence upon him, cannot live without prayer. This a pious soul doth as naturally as a new born infant turns to the breast. The divine nature has its infants as well as animal nature. A child of God makes all its requests known to God as a father. This principle makes a man a steady adherent to God's worship and ordinances, in opposition to them that are against him. David and Solomon are an awful warning to the best of men, after their first advances in religion, and even in the decline of life, to keep a guard upon their senses and passions, to watch and pray that they end not their days under the evil and power of temptations.

5thly;

5thly; They import the strong obligation that the children of Godly persons are under to be religious. "My son know thou the God of thy father." O ye youths that now sit in the presence of God, if God has been your fathers God, your fathers governor, benefactor and friend. If they have been blessed by him, should not this prevail upon you to make the same choice? If you have principles of self-preservation operating under the direction of understanding, you will choose Jehovah as your God, and walk, in the precepts of wisdom. If you have a regard for your parents, for their memory, experience, example, and dying counsels, it will determine you to enter on a religious life. This was the best thing they could recommend; it was their comfort in life and at death, and shall it not be yours? See the dreadful consequences of rejecting the covenant of thy fathers: "If thou forsake Him, He will cast you off for ever." Life and death are put before you, it is put to you, to determine your fate by your present choice. If God was your fathers God, you stand fair for coming
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into the same relation : Yet God's covenant relation to them will not secure you ; no, if you break through the obligations of relation, force your conscience to forsake God and his ways, God will cast you off forever, and leave you the degenerate children of his servants.

I proceed now, as was proposed *secondly* ; to deal with parents to recommend religion to their children.

Frequently, all superiors and inferiors, are, in the language of scripture, comprehended under the appellations, fathers and children, as is plain from the fifth commandment. There are fathers of the state, as magistrates, supreme, and subordinate, who ought, by their example and precepts, to recommend religion to their political children ; being God's vicegerents in this world, clothed with dominion and authority over others, it should be their chief care to serve God, in whose name they act and govern ; Is. xlix. 23. There are fathers of the church, as ministers and elders, who ought, by their example, and by their earnest exhortations, to recommend religion to their

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ecclesiastical children. It is for this very end that they are put into their office, to be instant in season and out of season, in recommending religion by every possible means, to their fellow men. There are parents in respect of years, who ought to teach and recommend religion to their younger brethren of mankind: Their days should speak, and the multitude of their years should teach wisdom. There are fathers in gifts and graces, whom we ought to respect and endeavour to imitate: Joseph was such a father to Pharaoh. But there are also fathers of families, (and it is with them that I have more immediately to argue), who are bound by every endearing tie, warmly to recommend religion to their offspring. None can recommend religion to others however, who are devoid of it themselves: When irreligious people pretend by their words to recommend religion to their children or fellow creatures, their conduct is as incongruous, as a jewel in the snout of a swine: If men have not the knowledge of God themselves, how can they communicate it to others? If they have not the love
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of God shed abroad in their own hearts, how can they prove its excellency to others? You all know if you have not a fortune of wordly good, you cannot leave one to your children: If that you have a fortune, and waste it by idleness and dissipation, you are unjust to your offspring: Even so, if you recommend not religion to them, you not only dishonour God, ruin yourselves, but you are the destroyers of your little ones. You must profess religion, if you would wish to recommend it to others. Many indeed have the profession of it without the practice, but the practice requires the profession of it; no man can ever recommend religion effectually who is not himself the professor of the same: Your profession must be such as is not contradicted by the practice, for if example uniformly destroys precept, it proves that there is no true religion in your hearts, and therefore cannot recommend it properly to others. I doubt not but all the parents now hearing me, wish to pay all their just debts to men: So far well: But will you be more just to men than to your God
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and your children? You are under the strongest obligations to praise God, and to teach your children the religion of Jesus Christ our glorious redeemer. "*O Lord, the living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day; the father to the children shall make known thy truth.*" Man is born like the wild ass's colt without knowledge. And you see that your children come into the world naked, helpless creatures; you think yourselves obliged to clothe them, and to teach them to work at some proper employment that they may be able to provide the necessaries of life: This is so far right; but O mind the one thing needful! the salvation of their immortal souls. O! ye parents, endeavour to persuade them to believe in Jesus Christ our blessed Lord: Faith in him is the foundation of all true religion; labour to bring them to the knowledge of the truth as it is in him. Give them precept upon precept for instruction; and shew them in your own lives a continued course of well doing for confirmation. Can you see the leprosy of sin, the worst plague, breaking out in your dear little ones, and not
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apply the means which God in his mercy hath appointed for curing the same? O lead them, pray that the spirit of God may lead them, to the healing and purifying blood of the slain lamb!

Parents discharge your duty to your offspring; for God's sake, I beseech you do it. You are under the controul of an expresse law to do so; for the Lord saith; "*These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up;*"

Deut. vi. 7. God hath done much for you; therefore, from a principle of gratitude, educate your children for His service: Seeing that He loved you in such a degree as moved Him to send His only begotten Son to redeem you from misery, what obligations are you under to train up your offspring in His fear?

Parents, O for the sake of religion and its interest in future times, do your duty to your little ones! The subsistence of religion

gion in the world greatly depends upon the knowledge, wisdom, virtue, usefulness, piety, of the rising generation. God in great wisdom has ordained that the human race shall not come to their full strength and maturity so early as the inferior tribes do, in order that the young ones may be long under the inspection of their parents. That they may be instructed in the principles of Christianity, and in wise maxims, to fit them for acting a proper part in life. Yet, alas, to the disgrace of some parents, have not their children lived upwards of twelve years under their eyes, and are still ignorant of the very first principles of the Christian religion? At their baptism they promised solemnly to train them up in the holy religion of blessed Jesus, our Saviour; but their promise has hitherto been unfulfilled. What a dreadful reckoning shall such parents have to make, when they appear before the judgment seat of Christ, if they die without repentance? O let them in time consider their ways, and turn unto the Lord, and beg grace from Him, to enable them to instruct their dear young ones with unremitting

mitting diligence, in the principles of our holy religion. Let them pray earnestly for the spirit of all grace to teach them and their children.

Fartber; Ye parents, for the sake of your dear little ones, teach them to embrace the counsels of eternal wisdom, and to walk in the path of life. It is natural for you to wish that your children may do well in this world, and be happy in the next. But remember, they neither can do well here, nor be happy hereafter without religion. It is irreligion which destroys the happiness of man in this life, and makes him completely miserable in the life which is to come. Not only for the sake of your offspring should you teach them the ways of religion but for your own sakes also: For how will it grieve you to see your children growing up in all manner of wickedness, becoming hardened blackguards and vagabonds on the face of the earth, and may in consequence of their crimes be brought unto an untimely end? To prevent therefore their misery and disgrace in this world, and to save yourselves grief of heart, teach them the principles

principles of religion. And if your neglecting to educate them properly happen to be the cause of their everlasting ruin, how dreadful the reflection! Can you think of your children dwelling forever with the damned in hell? O train them up in the way they should go, and when they are old, they will not depart from it. For the ways of religion are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. But I shall now proceed to the third article in the method, which is to persuade children to be religious.

Here it is almost unnecessary to observe, that I address myself to young people in general, to those who are arrived at a period of life, when capable of attending, in some degree, to what I am about to say unto them. Well then, my dear young friends, I would urge you to embrace religion from the consideration of God's sovereignty over you. Do you honour your earthly parents, and will you not also honour your heavenly father? Do you fear your superiors, and will you not fear your God? What answers do your consciences
give

give to these interrogations? Where are the first fruits, the dew of your youth, the calves of your lips? Hath it been your chief work to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness? Are you not persuaded that you are more the Lord's than you are your parents? He is your Maker and Preserver, and he is therefore entitled to the chief place in your heart, and to your services. Let God therefore see you every day, kneeling by his Altar with the morning sacrifice, and every evening looking up to Him for an answer to your prayers. My young friends, it is not a matter of indifference whether you serve your Creator or not: For He insists upon it, and commands you to remember your Creator in the days of your youth. Under the Old Testament dispensation, stubborn and rebellious children were stoned to death; how much severer punishment do they deserve who despise the law and counsels of the Almighty? Consider, my dear young friends, That He is a merciful, and an indulgent Father to you. He has long forbore to punish you as your sins deserve; He is still wait-

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ing to be gracious to you, willing to save you and to make you happy: O destroy not yourselves, while God is willing and able to save you from all misery: But be his loving and obedient children, and you will enjoy everlasting happiness. Think how much God hath done to win your affections to himself? He hath made you noble creatures, capable of knowing, of loving, of being holy, of conversing with, and of enjoying himself forever in glory. He has made the heavens to smile upon you,—the earth to be fruitful for your sake,—the beasts thereof to obey you, and to be subservient to your comfort,—given His son to death for you,—promised you His Holy Spirit,—prepared mansions of glory for you in the abodes of bliss,—and will you not love and obey your heavenly Father? Will you not press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling in Jesus Christ?

2dly; To embrace religion, will promote your own real interest; Therefore I would beseech you to be religious. Religion will support your minds in the midst of the vicissitudes of life, comfort you at the solemn
hour

hour of death, and through the merits of Christ and the working of the Holy Ghost upon your souls, will lead you to the land of uprightness and of eternal joys. For godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Do you believe this? If you do, God will be your friend, and shall make all things work together for your good; if you do not, you may believe, that death the king of terrors, and God your awful and Great Judge, shall at last convince you, that when you disbelieved and rejected religion, you rejected your own interest and happiness. Whilst your souls are susceptible of good, I beseech you to become truly religious, ere your hearts be thoroughly hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. You may believe me, there is no true pleasure,—there is no real happiness,—there are no durable riches,—there are no lasting joys,—there are no real honours,—there is nothing valuable to be enjoyed without being religious; for sorrow, misery, poverty, despair, disgrace, unexpressible anguish and wo, constitute the portion of the wicked and irreligious: But
God

God himself is the portion of the truly religious; heaven is their home; rivers of pure delights forever flow upon them. But, in the

Third place; I would persuade you to be religious for the sake of your parents. You certainly would not wish to be the mean of breaking their hearts, and of bringing them, covered with their grey hairs, in sorrow to their graves! they love you dearly; and can you wilfully and deliberately vex them! O how it wounds the hearts of religious parents, to see their children breaking the law of their God! You surely would shudder at the thoughts of plunging daggers into their bosoms; but when you live in wickedness, you as effectually wound their hearts as if you did so! They wish to meet you at last in heaven, among the Lamb's retinue; O! how must it then wring their very hearts to see you, or hear of you, walking in the broad way which leadeth to destruction? But how will they rejoice to know, that you walk in the good ways of the Lord? Their language is to you, "We live, if you our children stand fast in the Lord." If then you have the least spark
of

of affection for your parents, embrace religion, and imitate their good example.

You, my dear young folks, whose religious parents are in heaven resting from their labours, recollect their tender concern for your happiness ! remember their virtues, their justice, goodness, beneficence, piety, prayers, their instructions to you, their tears for their sins and failings ; imitate their example, shine in the ways of righteousness, and make it appear, that you are the offspring of the servants of the Lord : “ *Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them : and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*” The spirits of your parents in glory will rejoice to hear that you are walking in the way which leadeth to eternal life ; perhaps they are well informed of all your conduct, by the angels of God, who on particular business visit this earth, or by God Himself who knows all things : Be this as it may, follow you the
Lord

Lord fully by walking according to His holy word, and He will be a father unto you, your God and your guide through life, will by his spirit conduct you to the mansions of rest, where your parents are, and He Himself will be your portion forevermore.

In the fourth place; I would earnestly beseech young people to embrace and maintain religion for the sake of God's church and the subsisting of holiness among the children of men. In a little time your religious parents will be called to join the church triumphant in heaven; and the management of the affairs of church and state shall devolve upon the young and rising generation. Without religion what an awful and horrible scene would this world exhibit? Cruelty,—bloodshed,—injustice,—anarchy,—rapine,—massacre,—every abominable vice,—would universally prevail. The individuals who reject and despise religion, do all in their power to bring the world into this frightful condition: For it is obvious, if all persons in the world followed their example, it would instantly be in that dreadful

dreadful situation. Religion is the best thing in the world ; and that it might dwell among mankind was the end for which God created the world, and for the same end He upholds it. When the Antediluvian people had almost banished religion from the earth, the Almighty drowned all with the flood, except the few persons in whose breasts religion had its seat. And, were religion again entirely lost, God would certainly destroy the world, for without religion it is not worthy of preservation. Now, ye youths, on you we have our eyes fixed, in you our hopes are placed, wishing, that when we are gone to the land of forgetfulness, you may keep, by the blessing of heaven, religion alive in the earth. Death is making many vacancies in the church of Christ, which can be filled up only by you : Seek the Lord therefore while you are young, grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, that you may be qualified for filling the stations which are allotted for you. The houses of your parents are the principal nurseries from whence you as beautiful olive plants are to be brought to adorn the temple

ple of the Lord. But much depends upon yourselves,—upon your conduct,—upon your joining with your parents in the good work of God,—upon your endeavours to obtain the holy spirit of God for your guide through life ; for the virtue of your parents will not of itself make you religious, the graces of the spirit must be infused into your own hearts ; God hath promised to give His holy spirit to them who sincerely ask Him. Earnestly, therefore, pray that God may pour down His holy spirit upon you, who alone can make you truly religious. It seldom happens, however, that religion enters into families from which God hath been as it were expelled, nor are the places which death and apostates make vacant in the church, often properly filled by the branches of such families. So that, if you the children of God's people have any regard for the church of Christ, do your utmost to promote true religion in the world.

It only now remains to make some application. But, as all which has been said is of a practical nature, that may be done in the following short paragraphs.

Know

Know, my hearers, that religion is the glory of the hoary head, and the ornament of the sprightly youth. A lively sense of the goodness of God, and of divine things should be carried along with us through all the periods of life. Our religion consists in the knowledge of, and in the practice of our duty. No man can be religious and disjoin these two things. Learn then from the scriptures to know your duty; and apply to the grace of God for strength to enable you to do it. More particularly,

In the first place; I exhort you who are parents, to say unto each of your children, "Know thou the God of heaven." You are under vows to do so, the vows of God are upon you; there did many of you stand in the church before God, angels, and men, and voluntarily came under solemn promises to train up your children in the righteous ways of the Lord. By baptism, the mark of God was upon them, the seal of the covenant, distinguishing them as His property, the lambs of His flock; and if you treat them not as such, by teaching them the religion of Christ, you, upon the mat-

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ter, practically deny their relation to God and to the Christian church : And use them as if they belonged to the Devil. But justice binds you to educate your little ones in the religion of our Redeemer ; instruction being as much due by you to their souls, as food, raiment, and portions are to their bodies. If you teach them not to know the God of heaven, you are unjust to them, and forfeit the character of honest parents. Your children are a trust committed to your care by your great Creator, who will demand an account of your conduct towards them when He calls you to judgment, if they are lost through your negligence, He will require their blood at your hands.

Secondly ; Be exhorted, you who are young people, to honour and obey your religious parents : So far as their commandments, instructions, advices, are agreeable to the word of God, when you disobey them, despise them, you disobey and despise the authority of God, for He commands you to “ *Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,*” Religious

ligious parents may, and are sometimes vexed by irreligious children, but if they do their duty, their sins shall not be laid to their account: The sins of such children, however, are highly aggravated; you are far worse than poor unfortunate young ones who have irreligious and wicked parents, they see, and hear of nothing, but sin; whilst you transgress against the good example of your parents, which shall dreadfully heighten your condemnation in the awful day of Judgment, if you repent not. Delay not to seek the Lord: They who seek Him early shall obtain His mercy and grace. Put not off the working of your salvation to middle, nor old age. A great part of mankind is cut off by death in the prime of their days, and in the flower of their youth; none of you have any security against death: Without loss of time then, endeavour by the grace of God to become truly religious; and He will bless you, and be your guide all your days, and afterwards will bestow upon you a crown of life.

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S E R M O N VI.

1 Chron. xxviii. 9.—*Know thou the God of thy Father.*—

DAVID the king of Israel, who uttered the text, and addressed it to his son Solomon, no doubt knew, that his said son was like the bright morning star among his countrymen, in respect of his natural and acquired knowledge; yet this dying parent considering it as nothing in comparison of what it might be advanced unto by the spirit of inspiration, and by a diligent exercise of the powers of his mind in studying the Creator's works, and by obeying His commandments; exhorted him to know the God of his father. There is a speculative, and a practical knowledge of the Almighty. The former

former is uncertain and fluctuating like the vapours in the air; the latter is solid, and affects the heart and reforms the life. The object here recommended to be known by Solomon and by us, is God. A Being who transcends the comprehension of all created minds; and who is only perfectly known by Himself. There is however, a knowledge of Him attainable which is necessary unto salvation. To be saved by Him from the consequences of our guilt, it is requisite that we believe in his existence and in His glorious perfections. The only thought which we can form of God by a contemplation of His works, is that of a first cause; and perhaps also we might guess that He is possessed of infinite power, wisdom, mercy, justice, and of unbounded goodness. He hath given us, however, a more certain guide, to lead us to the temple of knowledge, His written word of Revelation; this is His own light with which He hath visited us, to conduct us to the knowledge and enjoyment of Himself, in His Son our Lord Jesus Christ. We shall therefore be inexcusable, if we believe not in God, and in the testimony which He hath given us in
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the Bible, concerning our Saviour. He that believeth shall be saved, and he who believeth not shall perish. Faith has its foundation in knowledge. Therefore was Solomon called upon in the text, *to know the God of his father*. The practical knowledge of God is a distinguishing blessing, obtained through His grace, by all who shall be saved.

I purpose in further handling this subject, *first*; to make a few observations concerning our knowledge of God : *secondly*; to shew you that it is a great and invaluable blessing : *thirdly*; shall point out, how it is acquired.

I begin then to make some observations concerning our knowledge of God. *In the first place*; I remark, that the knowledge of the most knowing of the sons of men concerning God, is very limited and imperfect. They are of yesterday, and comparatively know nothing. Far less however do we know of God and of his wonderful works than we ought to know. Although the height of human knowledge concerning Him and His works is very limited and imperfect, yet some persons, in respect of knowledge, are

as luminaries, whilst many professing Christians have little or no light in them, because wisdom has not entered into their hearts, neither has knowledge become pleasant to their souls. All the knowledge we can have of God, however, is only obscure, like that view we have of an object through a glass, or in the twilight of the morning. We cannot have such a knowledge of God as people have of one another by seeing each other face to face; for He dwelleth in glory too brilliant for mortals to behold. We exist in time and place; but the Great God of the universe fills immensity, and inhabits eternity. Who then by searching can find out God? Who can find out the Almighty unto perfection? None can find Him out to perfection. We can only learn something of His nature from the works of creation, the procedure of His Providence, and from the clearer view we have of Him in the volume of Divine Revelation. Still, however, we know comparatively little of his power, wisdom, and glorious perfections. For here we know only in part; and the Prophets themselves prophesied but in part.

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Little do we know of God in this world. So much knowledge of Him notwithstanding in this state is attainable, as is necessary to secure the present comfort, and the eternal happiness of His people. "*Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*"

Secondly; The true knowledge of God is the knowledge of Him in Christ. *This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. For in Him dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily.* Even our knowledge of God in Christ is limited and imperfect. Men may from the works of God, by the exercise of the powers of their own minds, acquire some obscure knowledge of God, and yet they may remain enemies to Him by wicked works, (nay devils themselves have a knowledge of the power and awful Majesty of God, they believe in His glorious perfections, and tremble at the thoughts of His inflexible justice,) but the true knowledge of God in Christ, makes the heart of man better, and reforms his life and conversation. The most penetrating philosopher
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does but guess at the nature of God, till once by faith he learns it in Christ. Philosophical knowledge qualifies us for fellowship with the learned; but the far more excellent knowledge of God in Christ fits us for holding communion with Himself, with the saints, and with the redeemed in glory: Having put on the new man which by God is renewed in knowledge, we become the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life and happiness.

Now we may inquire, What we know of God in Christ which is not to be learned of Him from the works of creation? If the works of God, in the volume of creation had been sufficient to give fallen man a renovating knowledge of Him the Great Creator, and to shew him the way to immortal happiness, surely a Divine written Revelation, and the incarnation of the Son of God, would have been altogether unnecessary. By the light of nature we may have a faint view of his perfections; however it is in the glass of Divine Revelation that they are more clearly to us displayed. Had man continued in his primeval state of

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rectitude, a written Revelation; and the incarnation of the Son of God would have been superfluous. The beautiful creation, and immediate intercourse with God Himself, would have made man abundantly wise; he would probably have known God, as the Angels and the Redeemed do in heaven, though not in the same degree of perfection. Man however became a sinner, and his guilt broke up intercourse with God, and excluded the light of heaven from his heart forever, until the sun of righteousness do there arise with healing under his wings, dispelling the clouds of sin and of ignorance.

But to speak more pointedly to the article under illustration, we see more clearly in Christ, the evil nature of sin, and that God is wise, just, merciful, good and gracious, unchangeable in His nature, loving to His people, and that He abhors iniquity; than we can discover by the light of creation. Deists and unbelievers may sneer at this doctrine, but it is true, and shall bear the examination, and admiration of men and Angels throughout eternity. What can display

display His wisdom more illustriously than the invention of the substitution of His Son in our room and stead? What can display His justice more eminently, than the execution of it on His own Son? What can display His mercy more gloriously, than the giving His Son to die for us? What can prove His goodness and graciousness more, than again receiving us through Christ into his favour and protection? What possibly can demonstrate more clearly His unchangeableness, than the steady execution of His decrees in the scheme of our redemption by Christ? Could any thing prove his love to fallen men more evidently, than the sending of His well beloved Son to accomplish their salvation? *God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* What can more forcibly show us the evil nature of sin, and God's abhorrence of it, than the sufferings of Christ? *He the just suffered for the unjust that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.* Some have had the effrontery lately to represent the sufferings
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of Christ, as inconsistent with moral justice, Let it however be remembered, that the end of inflicting punishment is to prevent the commission of crimes. The pains of law being inflicted on one substituted instead of the transgressor, may have the same effect in deterring others from iniquity, as if inflicted on the actual criminal, if the Proxy suffers voluntarily. The sufferings of Christ, however, differ greatly from all other sufferings; their ends were to atone for the guilt of such as will be saved, to reconcile them to God, to wash them from the defilement of sin, and to deter them from the practice of iniquity.

Likewise we have by the knowledge of God in Christ, a more distinct view of our duty, than we could have had from the light of nature. Socrates the wisest of philosophers was of opinion, that man never did, nor never could, merely by the exercise of reason in studying nature, discover the entire duty of the human race. As already above hinted, had man continued in a state of perfection, I doubt not but his will would have inclined him to do his whole

whole duty ; but having become depraved, his will in that unrenewed condition continually inclines him to do evil : The knowledge of God in Christ however counteracts this wicked disposition, and teaches all who acquire it, to live according to the gospel. In the gospel of Christ, the most exalted and the purest morality is taught that ever was, or ever shall be preached to man. Deists themselves admit this truth. Our duty to God, to ourselves, to one another, to society in general, is clearly pointed out in the Revelation of Christ. He hath shewn us by His doctrines and example how to live, and how to die. *To do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with God : To fear God and keep His commandments ; for this is the whole duty of man :* The true understanding of which we come to by knowing our Creator in Jesus Christ our Lord. If any should be so weak as to object to the doctrine here taught, and say as Solomon was in the text exhorted by his father David, "*To know God,*" long before the incarnation of Christ ; the knowledge therein recommended could have no reference to the knowledge

knowledge of God in Christ. I answer such reasoning is very inconsiderate. For there is only one way to heaven, and that way is by the knowledge of God in His Son: And this knowledge was obtained by all who were saved under the Old Testament dispensation, though not in the same degree of clearness as is communicated to the followers of Christ, now under the New Testament Regulation. The people of God under the former believed that in the fulness of time the Messiah was to come; under the latter they believe and adhere to the doctrines which He taught: In the one case and in the other, the Redeemed only have reached, and do come to heaven, through the merits of the slain Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. But,

Thirdly; The Saint's knowledge of God is satisfying and progressive. This assertion may to some people appear strange, that imperfect and limited knowledge is satisfying and progressive, they cannot understand. Nevertheless, the experience of all saints confirms the truth of the observation. It may, indeed, be believed by all considerate men,

men, that all their knowledge, speculative, and practical, is only limited and imperfect; except as to some mathematical propositions of which the mind may have a clear and perfect knowledge. Our knowledge, however, of all other objects is only imperfect and obscure: And the knowledge we obtain of natural things is frequently very unsatisfying, and by no means recompences the mind for the search of acquiring it. Very often, the more we know of men, the less we esteem them: Nay, even the more we are acquainted with our own hearts (*a knowledge, however, truly beneficial*) the more we abhor our sinful condition. Notwithstanding, the more that we know of God, the more we will fear, love, and reverence His TRANSCENDENT GREATNESS. What can be more satisfying to the mind of man, than to be informed by a volume of incontrovertible evidence, that the AUGUST CREATOR is merciful,—That His tender mercies are over all his other works;—That He is all goodness, possessed of every possible perfection? What can be more comfortable to the mind in this changeable state, than to be convinced

convinced by sure evidence, that God is unchangeable, *that whom He once loves, "He loves unto the end?"* It is truly comforting to the people of God, in the midst of all their misfortunes and calamities, to consider that their Creator is always the same,—that in Him there is no change;—that He loves His people equally strong in the day of adversity, as of prosperity: Whether they are fortunate or unfortunate, rich or poor, in health or in sickness, at home or abroad, He is at all times their God, and Almighty protector. On the prospect of death, what is more desirable, than the well grounded hope of a blessed immortality? This is attainable by knowing God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Than such considerations, nothing can be more satisfying to the mind of man. Therefore, true Christians, do make progress in their knowledge of the great Creator; they grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. They will arrive at the stature of perfect new men in Him, but through eternity, though continually making progress in knowledge, they shall never reach its boundaries. So that,
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what attainments of knowledge the mind will possess through eternity, we can only form inadequate conceptions. There are beauties in our God in Christ, which shall excite the contemplation of men and angels, through a blessed eternity. Here there are regions of glory unexplored, depths of wisdom fathomless, and scenes of grandeur which cannot be described. After the followers of Christ on earth are united to Him by a true and living faith, they make progress in the knowledge of heavenly things. Their knowledge of God, at first, like their faith, is small as a grain of mustard seed, but it doth gradually increase, and after faith is turned into fruition in heaven, the soul continues forever to make improvements in knowledge. There in heaven her search after knowledge is easy and delightful; sin no more interrupts her intercourse with God the fountain of knowledge.

I go on now, as was proposed in the second article in the method, to shew you, that this knowledge which is recommended to us in the text, is a great and invaluable blessing.

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And in the *first place* ; I remark, That it is a distinguishing blessing. They who are possessed of this knowledge, are persons of real distinction. They are the excellent ones of the earth, with whom God delights to dwell. They are truly nobly born ; they are the children of the Most High. The nobles of the earth, if they have not this knowledge of God in their hearts, are mean, wholly vanity ; the poorest child of God is far their superior ; and he is a brother to those of them who are possessed of this distinguishing blessing. Nevertheless, when this knowledge, and earthly riches, and grandeur, are enjoyed by any person, such a person is always a God-like character. Then it is evident, that religion and virtue distinguish human nobility, and not that it ennobles them, as some weakly imagine. No: It is heavenly wisdom that knowledge recommended in the text, which raiseth one of the human race truly superior to another. It is more ornamental to a king than the earthly crown which he doth wear. To men in all their stations of life, this is, by far, of all they enjoy, the most ornamental,

tal, and durable : This is a gem which time shall not tarnish, but as the ages of eternity roll on, it increases in value, lustre, and beauty. *Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding : For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies : and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are paths of peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her ; and happy is every one that retaineth her.*

Secondly ; That this knowledge is an invaluable blessing will appear, when we consider our necessity of having it. In wordly affairs the value of any article is enhanced according to the necessity which people lie under of having the same. Now the acquirement of the knowledge which is recommended in the text is the one thing needful, needful above every other thing. Human learning is good in its own place, especially

specially when used as a handmaid to lead us to the knowledge of our God in Christ, but the last mentioned is the most necessary, and it is obtained by many who have none or little of human literature. Philosophical knowledge, fame, honour, grandeur, pleasure, and happiness, are pursued after, one or other of them, by all the children of men; happiness indeed is sought after by all, but different roads are taken to obtain it: It however can only be found in the paths of virtue and holiness. We cannot enter into these paths here in this world, nor into the celestial abodes and walks of the redeemed in heaven, without possessing in a less or greater degree, the knowledge recommended in the text. We can never properly fear God, and love him, and keep his commandments, until we know something of his adorable and amiable nature. Faith, and all the graces of the eternal Spirit have their foundation in the knowledge of the Creator in Christ. Except we build upon this foundation, all our religion, and righteousness, are as hay and stubble which which must burn in the great day of trial.

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Without true holiness of heart and of conversation, no man can enter in life eternal. When they who are ignorant of God come to knock for admittance into the kingdom of heaven, *Saying, Lord, Lord, open to us:* He will reply, *verily I know you not.* No strangers to God and holiness are admitted in within the gates of the New Jerusalem. Supposing they were admitted it would be no heaven to them; there they would see the great God enthroned in awful glory: the redeemed in one choir striking their harps: The Angels covering their faces with their wings, and crying holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty: the whole inhabitants send forth the acclamation of gratitude and joy to Christ, and to God the Judge of all. The strangers would look on Christ whom they had pierced by their sins, they would behold his eyes like a flame of fire darting into their very hearts; they would instantly remember, that they never properly praised Him upon earth, they cannot sing the song of the heavenly host: their consciences sting them: And heaven itself would be their tormentor. So that neither in this life,
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nor in that which is to come, comfort and happiness cannot be enjoyed by the children of men, without knowing their great Creator. Therefore the necessity of possessing this knowledge is abundantly evident. The want of it is the source of all immoralities, irreligion, and crimes, which so abound in the world. The want of it is the cause why so many Professors of Christianity depart from the ways of religion: their apparent goodness fades because they are not acquainted with God nor at peace with him.

I shall now endeavour briefly to show you as was proposed in the *third place*; How this knowledge is to be acquired.

And in the *first place*; I observe, That this knowledge is a gift from God. *For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous.* God the object of this knowledge so immense that we can only know something of Him in the light which he affords us by his word and Spirit. The powers of our minds are so weakened and darkened by sin, till that once God is pleased to renovate our hearts

hearts and dispel the clouds of darkness from off our understandings, and visit us with the rays of the sun of righteousness, we cannot know Him, love Him, nor serve Him, as we ought. The mind of man is in consequence of sin (of itself) not only incapable of perceiving saving truth, the knowledge of God, but is also enmity against God, full of error, and obstinately disobedient unto all his commandments. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually, SAITH THE LORD.* Such is the language of Divine Revelation concerning the depravity of man. Therefore it is obvious, man's thoughts being evil continually, that he (of himself) cannot come to the saving knowledge of his Creator and Redeemer, for to do so is the best of all works. But some men in this day of innovations have the boldness to abandon the heavenly religion of their fathers, and to teach *That man stands in the same relative condition with his Maker he ever did stand since man existed; and that it is his greatest consolation to*
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think so. The wisest of Philosophers, unaided by a Divine written Revelation, have conjectured the contrary. And indeed that man must have very inadequate ideas of the purity, and holy nature of God who thinks that the human race are so related unto God in the condition in which we behold them. What relation can inconsiderate, ignorant, foolish, passionate, cruel, malicious, revengeful, proud and unrelenting man, have to the *Great Creator*? Does not the actions of all men, in a less or greater degree, prove that these appellations are justly ascribed to mankind? Is it not therefore evident, that they have deviated from their original state of rectitude? God made all his works very good, and man after his own image. Had man therefore continued in that image, all his actions would have corresponded to the relation which subsisted betwixt God and him. His people indeed, when once they are born again, endeavour that their actions shall correspond to their dignity as His sons. But still they fail and come short of his glory. It is His will that they
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who do so believe in him be careful to maintain good works, and in virtue of his grace they are so. God in justice might have left all the human race to grope in that wilderness of sin and ignorance, in which they had strayed, without ever bringing any of them back to the knowledge of Himself. But eternal thanks be ascribed to our God, for manifesting Himself to the children of men.

Secondly ; This knowledge is to be obtained by carefully searching after it in the volume of God's word ; and by asking it from God : Although that it is a free gift bestowed by God upon his people, yet it must be diligently searched for by all who desire to obtain the same. They who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, do search the scriptures for greater attainments of the experimental knowledge of God. And they who are totally ignorant of the Almighty, must examine the holy oracles to acquire the saving knowledge of Him : In them many things concerning God are manifested, of which the works of creation are altogether silent ; and which reason never could have discovered : Such as the mani-

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festation of a trinity of persons in the unity
essence ; The incarnation of the Son of
God ; the redemption of his people ; the
riches of pardoning grace ; and the resur-
rection of the body. Reason never could
have found out these wonderful things.
Nay Angels themselves, who are possessed of
perfect reason, could never have found them
out and declared them. None can make a
proper discovery of God but God himself.
He must therefore be the author of all sav-
ing knowledge. God only knoweth the
heart, and alone hath access to instruct it ;
He hath drawn a vail over the human
mind, so that what passeth there in se-
cret can only be discerned by God and the
individual, unless expressed by signs. He
is the reformer of the heart. *If any man*
then lack wisdom, let him ask it of God,
who giveth unto all men liberally, and up-
braideth none who come unto Him asking
wisdom and grace through the merits of
Jesus Christ his Son. Ask, and it shall be
given you ; seek and ye shall find ; knock and
it shall be opened unto you. For every one
that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh
findeth ;

findeth; and to whom that knocketh, it shall be opened. There are too many who imagine, that great attainments in knowledge, are not upon them incumbent: They consider the acquirement of knowledge to be necessary only for men, whose profession is to teach others. This mistaken notion is the source of much mischief to individuals, and to the world at large. For were men enlightened with knowledge, they neither would act as they often do, nor suffer others to tyrannise over them. Incivility, and tyranny, and cruelty, are the offspring of ignorance. It is man's conduct to man which destroys the comfort and happiness of man, and wounds his heart. But ignorance is not only the source of innumerable ills in this world, it also ruins the soul, and sinks her into destruction everlasting. *My people (says God) are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee.* If people would but regularly set aside all their spare hours to the acquirement of knowledge, and ask the blessing of God upon their endeavours to obtain it; they would advance in knowledge, and find the same a most agreeable

able exercise. God has appointed us very able Teachers, to communicate knowledge unto our minds: viz. Nature, conscience, the law of God, the gospel, and the Spirit. What however will these Teachers avail us, if we attend not to their teaching? The voice of nature proclaims aloud through all her works, that God is a Being of unsearchable power and greatness; the voice of conscience tells you that you are guilty; the voice of the holy law of God denounces in thunder and lightning your condemnation: But the Son of God, the great Teacher of the world, came to earth, to save you from misery, His voice speaks unto you by His word and Spirit, and by his ministering servants. The voice of all those Teachers ye must have heard: Have ye heard savingly? Have they brought you to the knowledge of God, and to the obedience of His law? That is the question for your deliberation. The saving knowledge of God is practical in its nature. So that if you are made acquainted with God, your desires are to do His will, and to walk humbly with Him in newness of life.

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From this subject, we may see what is the cause of that ignorance which prevails amongst us, and all ranks of men : It is because we naturally hate heavenly knowledge, and do not seek to acquire it. We will not come unto the light, lest our deeds be made manifest. There is a thick cloud of sin and ignorance upon our minds,—a veil upon the heart and understanding,—and corrupt humours are in the eyes of believers themselves, which blind the sight of their minds, as Hagar could not see the well which was before her, by reason of grief, till God opened her eyes ; so we cannot see the things of God, nor properly know Him, until He gives us the seeing and knowing faculty. Let each of us, therefore, pray unto God, *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderful things out of thy law.* Let us all be diligent in learning, to know savingly, our Great Creator and Redeemer. For, *the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty Angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ ;*

Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.

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S E R M O N VII.

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1. Chron. xxviii. 9.—*And serve Him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind.*

ON reading these words, I doubt not but some will think, that they contain a hard law, which they are not able to obey. Would to God that we were all convinced of the perfection of His law, and of our inability perfectly to do His commandments: Then we would seek strength from Himself to enable us to do His will; and would receive out of His fulness grace upon grace. He hath promised to give us a new heart and a right spirit, let us hold Him at His word, and by faith ask and receive these from Him; then we will serve Him with
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that *perfect heart, and willing* mind which are mentioned in the text.

In the sequel of this discourse, I shall, *first*, inquire what may be implied in serving God? *Secondly*, Make some observations concerning that perfection of heart, with which we ought to serve him.

I begin then, to inquire what may be implied in serving God? Before I answer this question, however, as here stated, it may be observed, that God is independent of the services of all creatures. He was completely happy in the enjoyment of Himself before he proceeded to the work of making any creatures, whether animate or inanimate, rational or irrational: And their existence can add nothing to His innate happiness. We cannot, therefore, be serviceable to God in that sense, in which we may to one another. Although we derive the greatest advantages from serving God, "*Godliness being profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*" We ought not, however, to be religious, merely from a selfish

fish principle, but from true love to God and goodness.

Having made the above remark, I return to answer the question under consideration.

In general, serving God is the doing of His commandments in our hearts, and in all our conduct, the yielding a sincere obedience to all His laws, so acting from a true principle of love to Him and to holiness, and from a desire, that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we may do all to the glory of His great name. More particularly then, in the

First place ; It implies that there is a principle of life and of religion in the soul. Dead men cannot serve the living : No more can those who are spiritually dead serve the living God. It is the Spirit of life from On High, which in the sacred scriptures is uniformly represented as the cause of new obedience in the disciples of Christ. *You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* He

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quickens

quickens our souls, and enables us to serve God. Without His gracious influences, all our religious services are unacceptable to the Almighty ; nay, they are an abomination in His sight. Except that we are born again, made new creatures in Christ Jesus, we can neither serve God in the church on earth, nor enter into the kingdom of glory hereafter. The powers of our minds must be rectified, and tuned to serve and praise God,—the understanding must be enlightened,—the will must be renewed,—the conscience must be made acute,—the heart and affections must be so changed, as that they are with propriety in the scriptures called new, turned from the love of sin, and fixed upon God their proper object ; unless we are so fashioned, we cannot serve God with a “ *perfect heart, and with a willing mind* ;” for, otherwise, our hearts are entirely imperfect, and filled with all iniquity, and our minds not only unwilling to serve God, but continually inclined to disobey His commandments.

Secondly ; It implies that there is an agreement made between God and such as truly

truly serve Him. In civil society, a servant fixes his wages, and agrees with his master or employer, before he enters upon his work: So is it in this case, there can be no harmony between God and man, before man makes an agreement with his Creator, by parting with all his sins, and by according with the terms of the covenant of grace.

"Can two walk together except they be agreed?" To attempt to serve God, without agreeing with Him upon the terms of the covenant of grace, which are exhibited in the gospel, is like a man going into a forest where a lion watcheth for his prey, and may tear him in pieces; so doth God threaten to deal with such as pretend to serve Him without doing His commandments, or entering into covenant with Him. "Unto the wicked God saith, what hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and
" thy

“thy tongue formeth deceit. Thou fittest
“and speakest against thy brother: thou
“slandereft thine own mother’s son. These
“things hast thou done,—but I will reprove
“thee, and set them in order before thine
“eyes. Now, consider this, ye that forget
“God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there
“be none to deliver.” All persons in a
land where the gospel is preached, forget
God who do not enter into covenant with
Him by the blood of Jesus; who do not
accept of those terms of peace offered in the
gospel. Man in his unregenerate state is a
determined enemy to God and goodness;
and God is also a determined foe to all im-
penitent sinners, except they repent, they
must perish; by Jesus Christ His son, He
mercifully speaks unto them, and calls upon
them to repent of their sins, and to agree
with Him. There is no friendship,—no
agreement,—no harmony,—between God
and man, but through the GLORIOUS RE-
DEEMER: He hath made peace with God
for His people, and though they were once
afar off from God, are now brought near
through his precious blood: And are be-
come

come His willing servants. As their wages, He affords them daily maintenance, food and raiment, abundant supplies of grace for their souls, to enable them to do His will; and, to encourage them to be faithful in His service, He holds out unto them as a reward, a crown of eternal life and happiness, which undoubtedly He will bestow upon all who sincerely love Him. His servants are well pleased with these wages. They experience that His service is perfect freedom,—that the more faithful they are in it, the happier they are; having thus entered into covenant with their God, with Him their ADORABLE MASTER, like Enoch, they walk humbly, yet glorying in His service. Which leads me to observe,

Thirdly; That it implies a readiness of design to do his will. Faithful servants in civil society, in all their services, design, and desire to execute what their masters command; so the servants of the Most High, design, and fervently wish to do His commandments, and things which are agreeable to His will, and the doing any thing of a contrary nature they desire to avoid.

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In general, it is not the business of servants to inquire why their employers order this or the other piece of work to be executed; but it is their duty according to the mutual agreement made betwixt them to obey; to this there are indeed exceptions, especially if the performance of any thing be commanded contrary to the laws of God or of man. Those, however, who are the servants of God, may depend that He will order nothing to be done, but what is consistent with truth and justice, and they have no right to challenge what he doth, nor what he orders them to do. What he hath commanded man to do is so plain and practical, and evidently so good for the observer and for society, that all in the exercise of their reason must see the propriety of the laws of God. The Almighty (we learn from His word) has His own glory in view in His works and government. In a proper acknowledgment of His glory does our service to Him consist. *The Lord hath made all things for Himself. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure*

pleasure they are and were created. His people's service is to the praise and glory of His grace. Therefore, to glorify God, we should endeavour to have, in doing His commandments, the same design in view, which He has in enjoining obedience to them; namely, his own honour, and glory, and to promote the happiness of mankind.

In the fourth place; It implies doing good to our fellow creatures. Whoever truly serves God is desirous that others do so likewise. Not that the servants of the Most High abstain from His service when others do so; "*They follow not a multitude to do evil,*" whatever others do, they and their house are determined to serve the Lord, but they are nevertheless grieved on account of the folly, sin, and ignorance of their fellow creatures; and they do all in their power to bring them to the service of their great Master. The religion which is pure and undefiled is benevolent in its spirit; and all who are its real votaries are benevolent. The GREAT FOUNDER of Christianity was all benevolence: His heart being love to the children of men, His whole life was a scene
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of unparalleled goodness to promote their happiness. They who believe in Him are made partakers of his nature, their dispositions resemble His. They do good to the souls and bodies of their brethren of mankind as much as in them lies. They use all prudent and proper means for the conversion of the wicked; and they do their duties to the household of faith. They endeavour to reclaim the wicked, to instruct the ignorant, and to correct the foolish: And according to their circumstances, they feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and they administer comfort to the sick and mourning. Such a conduct, proceeding from proper motives, is an acceptable service unto God; for whatever good we do unto one of the least of Christ's disciples, He esteems it as done to Himself. They who do good to the people of God; and they who are the mean of turning others from wickedness unto the Lord, shall not fail of obtaining an eternal reward through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour.

But I proceed now to consider the second branch of the subject, *viz.*

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The perfection of heart with which we are called upon to serve God. *Serve Him with a perfect heart and a willing mind.*

The highest perfections of the most exalted creatures in the universe are mean and imperfect, when compared with God who is the standard of perfection. The heavens are not pure in His sight; how much more imperfect are the best habits, and dispositions, and frames, and actions, of sinful man? Though all rational creatures are infinitely inferior to the perfect pattern of perfection, they are, however, indispensibly obliged to resemble it in their proportion, and according to their capacity. So far as a finite creature can resemble an infinite Being, the people of God are bound to resemble Him. *Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your father who is in heaven is perfect.* The greatest and most perfect candle which ever was or can be made, bears little or no proportion to the sun, yet the candle resembles the sun in giving light, while darkness is the opposite of both. So the excellencies of Angels and Saints bear no proportion to the perfections of the Almighty

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mighty, yet they resemble them as they are of the same kind, though infinitely inferior as to degree, nevertheless, sin and guilt, in their roots and branches, are the reverse of the perfections of God, and are the contrary of His grace in believers. Man was made after the image of God. This likeness was chiefly in the heart and mind; the mind is the immortal part of man, that immaterial spirit within him which thinks, and the heart is the affections of the said mind which lead to action. Hence we are exhorted in the scriptures to keep our hearts with all diligence; for out of them are the issues of life. In consequence of sin and guilt our hearts are imperfect, and our minds are unwilling to serve God, until renewed by His power and grace. Therefore, it is evident, we cannot serve God with a perfect heart and a willing mind, until they are made so: Until we receive the new hearts and the right spirit promised in His word; until we are made a willing people in a day of His power. Entire perfection and freedom from sin, however, cannot be the meaning of the text, for that is not the attainment

tainment of any in this world. "*There is not a just man upon the earth who liveth and sinneth not.*" But it may signify, that purity of heart which raises us above sensual desires, and causeth us to imitate the example of our Saviour, by being holy in all manner of conversation. It may also signify conformity to Jesus in suffering, if thereunto called. He was made perfect through suffering, so many of His people are severely tried by affliction and by persecution. And why not? "*The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his Lord: But every one that is perfect shall be as his Master.*" In general, therefore, the perfect heart here recommended, imports the exercise of the graces, which the eternal spirit bestows upon the people of God; whether they are called to doing or suffering, they must exercise love to God, and mercy and goodness to their fellow creatures; and put their faith and hope in God, and endeavour through his grace to purify themselves, even as Christ is pure, and so they thus, *Serve God with a perfect heart*
and

and a willing mind; which perfect heart, and willing mind, more particularly,

First implies; That such are under the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ the glorious Redeemer. *The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did.* True Believers in Christ are not under the law, but under grace. All the real disciples of Christ are complete in Him who is the head of all principality and Power. In whom they are justified, and sanctified, and are made partakers of His holiness; being buried with Him in baptism, by the operation of God upon their souls they are raised with Him, and quickened together with Him in newness of life. So that Believers are as perfect as Christ Himself is perfect, in the eye of God's justifying grace, the same righteousness, being considered as on both; they are imperfect in themselves, but they are perfect in Him. He and His people are one; and they who do righteousness are righteous even as He is righteous. Because He lives they

they shall live also. Who can lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God who justifies them. There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Jesus became their surety, and to law and justice hath paid their debts, and another reckoning cannot come against them, for God hath accepted of the payment which He made for them and hath granted a full discharge. God made his Son, who knew no sin as to the committing of the same, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. The Lord laid on his Son the iniquities of all His people: And His Son by the once offering up of Himself hath perfected for ever them who are sanctified. The Lord Jesus then is our righteousness. In the first Adam we died, in him as our representative head, his sin became ours by imputation: But in Christ the second Adam we are made alive, and His all perfect righteousness is by God imputed to us, and by that faith implanted in our souls by the Spirit of God, we receive
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the said righteousness, and are made partakers of His communicable holiness.

Such sentiments the sacred scriptures teach and warrant us to believe: And, of all the sentiments contained in the volume of Divine Revelation, they are the most pleasing and comforting to an awaked conscience: Were they excluded from the Bible as some seem to wish, I know not what would remain in it consolatory to man. The great Luther when he got a view of them, observed, "That the gate of Paradise seemed to fly open to his view:—That he had a glimpse of its beauty, in contemplating these sacred truths; and a taste of its delights in believing them: So sweet a composure, and such a charming tranquillity, did they diffuse through his mind: And he said, that while we are ignorant of them, there is nothing but horror and dread around us."

Secondly; The perfect heart, and willing mind, with which we are exhorted to serve God, import, That the servants of God must be truly devout and holy. Though the saints of God are conscious of guilt and of infirmi-

infirmities, yet they truly hate sin and sincerely love holiness: And they fervently wish and aim to be holy and devout in their thoughts, actions, and in the motives of their conduct. Were a man's actions never so becoming and praise worthy, if they are not done from proper motives, he is devoid of holiness. So far are the doctrines of grace, from being hostile to morality, as some teach, that they influence the heart, and the whole internal frame of the man, who believes in them, as well as his conversation. "God forbid says he, with an inspired author, that I should sin because grace doth abound." It is his desire to do that which is well pleasing in the sight of God. No action can be agreeable to Him, however good in itself, unless it proceeds from a proper motive, as is pretty evident from the case of king Amaziah who did once that which was right in the sight of the Lord; but surely he did it not with a perfect heart, for we have reason to think that he fell finally away from doing righteousness, unto idolatry, and perished in his sins. While king Aha, on the other hand, though the high

high places were not taken away, yet his heart was perfect before the Lord all his days. For he had a sincere desire to do the will of God. Noah was such a sincere soul, as got from God the character of perfection, is styled a just man, and a perfect in his generation: His affections were set on God, and his mind was willing to serve Him. The servants of the Most High carefully consider what is the good and acceptable will of God; and they aim to live according to the same. "For our rejoicing (say they) "is this, the testimony of our conscience, "that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not "with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of "God, we have had our conversation in the "world." They know, if they regard iniquity in their hearts, that God will hear their prayers. They study to be upright before God, and keep themselves from their iniquities. In vain then, do persons pretend to be servants of God, who are not conscientious in public and in private, to live as it becomes His saints. Which leads me to observe,

Thirdly;

Thirdly ; The perfect heart, and the willing mind, with which we are called upon to serve God, import, that His servants direct their course to a perfect place. This one thing they desire of the Lord, and that will they seek after ; that they may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of their lives, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. Though they are not in this state absolutely perfect, yet, *“ they press towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”* They mourn for their own sins, and for the sins of others, and they fervently wish to be delivered from the influence and contagion of sin. Blessed are such persons ; for they shall be comforted. They are running the Christian race, and they shall gain the prize, the crown of immortal glory. They are fighting the battles of the Lord ; and they shall obtain complete victory. Ere long, all ye who are so serving God, shall be among the spirits of just men made perfect, dwelling with God in heaven ; for this was the end why Christ redeemed you, that ye might forever dwell with Him in
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glory. Then more and more *set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth, For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.* When Christ who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear *with him in glory.* Delightful consideration,—to appear with Christ in glory, and to dwell with Him forever in heaven, the most beautiful, the most glorious, and the most happy place of all God's dominions; but Christ is infinitely more beautiful and glorious. His presence and favour would make any place a heaven, and His displeasure and frowns would make heaven itself a hell. He is the glory and the happiness of heaven, and he is the terror of hell.

From this subject ye may see how happy the servants of God are. They serve the greatest and the best of Masters; One who will never cease to care and provide for them: In old age He will not cast them off from His service, but they will ever enjoy His favour, and dwell forever in His house: They are selected from the rest of the world, and adopted into the number of His family: The image of God is stamped on their souls,
and

and His righteousness adorns their whole frame : Their souls have begun to live that life which shall never end, and their bodies are washed from all filthiness of the flesh and of the mind, and are gradually preparing for complete Redemption : Hail, ye highly favoured of the Lord, ye are on your way to eternal rest ; mansions delightful are preparing for you, and rivers of pleasure have begun to flow upon you, whose streams shall ever be more copious, whose source is inexhaustible. Affliction and heavy trials, however, may attend you in this vale of tears, but God himself, however, will soon wipe away all tears from your eyes, and gladden your countenances so, that they shall never again become sad.

Go on then, ye servants of the Most High, in doing his commandments, your service is 'perfect freedom,—real liberty ; and this is your comfort that it shall never end. Be faithful unto the death, and ye shall receive the crown of eternal life. When once ye have made a few more struggles against that enemy in your own breasts, (indwelling sin), and against the foe
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of your salvation, ye shall obtain victory complete, and everlasting repose. Tune your harps even here in the wilderness, in a foreign land, and sing the trophies of the cross, that song which is ever new, and which has no end, by so rejoicing in the Lord, ye shall discomfit all your enemies, and enter triumphantly into glory, through the merit of the blood of Christ. We may also see from this subject,

The misery of those who do not serve God. Alas! their hearts are wholly imperfect, and their minds are entirely unwilling to serve their Creator and Redeemer. They serve Satan the very worst tyrant; and are his willing and obedient slaves. Poor creatures they really are ignorant of their miserable condition, and it is the interest of this tyrant to keep them in ignorance, until once they receive their wages for their service, which they shall not fail of receiving in due time,—too soon they will all think. The wages of sin is death *eternal*, everlasting misery, and they who continue in the service of the wicked one, must receive the wages due to such servants:

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Their present joy is unsatisfactory,—their present condition is comfortless;—but their future misery is inconceivable. I beseech all such to consider their situation ere it be too late to better it. Though your hearts are desperately wicked, and your minds unwilling to serve God, yet He can, and is willing to give you new hearts, and right spirits: He has done so to many who were once as keen enemies to Him as you are, and their spirits are now happy in Heaven. Cease ye then to do evil, and, like them, learn to do well. I know ye do not wish to join the company of the damned in hell; but be not deceived, if you continue in the service of sin and Satan in this world, hereafter hell shall be your home. May God turn you to Himself, and incline your hearts to His service.

S E R-

S E R M O N VIII.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST THE TREE OF LIBERTY.

Gal. vi. 14.—*God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

THE wicked and erroneous, in every age of the Church, have laboured to counteract the influence of the truth, as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord. In the days of the Apostle Paul, the Penman of this Epistle, they directed all their force against the doctrines of the gospel. He had been successful, in establishing a church at *Galatia*, (as in many other places,) after his departure from it, false teachers appeared there blending the observance of the ceremonial law, and the tenets of *Judaism* with Christianity; they

they represented the doctrine of justification before God, through the imputed righteousness of Christ, which the Apostle taught, as absurd and erroneous; and they maintained that justification was to be obtained by obedience to the law. This was at once subverting the gospel. St Paul ardently wishing the real welfare of the Galatians, and the triumph of the religion of Jesus, takes up his pen, and, by the guidance of the Holy Ghost, writes this Epistle to them, with a view, to establish them in the faith of Christ. His language here, as usual, is nervous and manly. His opponents gloried in the circumcision and number of their followers. But, says this great defender of Christianity, "*God forbid, that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" As if he had said, "forbid it heaven, that I should boast, triumph, or rejoice in any thing, save in the cross of Christ!"

In the sequel of this discourse, I purpose, *First*; to mention some things in which true Christians will not glory:

Secondly;

Secondly; To shew you in what they will glory.

Thirdly; To point out the cause they have, for so glorying.

Having briefly dispatched these general articles, I shall make some application of this truly interesting subject. And O may that glorious, and precious Jesus, who expired upon the cross, but who is now shining in the midst of the throne in heaven, crown all with His rich and divine blessing!

Let us then consider,

First; Some things in which Christians will not glory. And we remark, that they will not glory in sin. Persons who have been baptised in the name of the glorious Trinity, however, may be found, in a Christian land, glorying in their iniquities, and consequently in their shame; taking pleasure in the ways of sin, and boasting of their acts of wickedness; living quite opposite to the laws of God, and the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Although such persons may not have professionally disclaimed their baptism, yet surely they pretend not to be the followers of Christ: They have not faith in Christ; they

they are devoid of good works ; they are strangers to God, and aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel : and though they call themselves Christians, yet God, Angels, and Saints, and their own consciences, tell them that they are *liars*, and that the truth is not in them. True Christians may, and some of them do fall into sin, but they will never knowingly glory in the same. He that committeth sin is of the devil: for the devil sinneth from the beginning. *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin ; for his seed remaineth in him : and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* When any of the people of God do fall into transgression, they are as captives in the time of war, it is against their will, nothing gives them more pain, they are covered with shame ; and abhor themselves in dust and ashes, blushing to lift their countenances to the place where God's honour dwells. The Lord hath pity upon them, He lifts them up, and pours the oil of gladness into their wounded spirits. But,

Secondly; Christians will not glory in their strength nor beauty. The human race are

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indeed fearfully and wonderfully made: The Lord God is their Maker: When at first they came from His hands, they were innocent and beautiful: Their external form is still noble and comely. But ah! how is the gold become dim, the most fine gold changed? Every part of the universe is beautiful, and "just, and wise but man; "vile man is a solecism in nature; tempests "and whirlwinds have their use; but vicious, ungrateful man, is a blot in the fair "page of universal beauty." Real Christians are fully convinced of their vileness which adheres to them in consequence of the fall; and they will not glory in their bodily strength nor beauty. For man's doom is irrevocably fixed: *Dust thou art, and to dust shalt return. It is appointed for all men once to die, and after death is the judgment.* Death soon overcomes the strongest men; their strength is only weakness when to it opposed. And personal beauty is a fair flower, which may be sullied with every blast, and soon, like the snow before a warm wind, must fade away. Death shall soon render, the comliest form, pale and loathsome! Grief and disquieting cares, shall

shall soon mar the loveliest countenance ! the most active limbs, and the strongest arms shall soon be weakness, unable to move ! the stoutest heart shall soon throb in the keenest sensations of pain ! the worms shall soon feed on thy flesh in the devouring grave ! O sin ! how hast thou dishonoured our nature, and destroyed our frame ? The children of men then have no cause to be proud and high minded ; pride is a garb which ill becomes any of them : Yet are there not to be found, sons and daughters of men, who call themselves Christians, glorying in their strength and beauty ? such are not the disciples of Christ : for His followers will not glory in their own personal strength nor beauty : They glory in His holy name, in the beauty, strength, and preciousness, of Him only : They say of Him, *He is altogether lovely* : He is the joy and delight of their souls.

Thirdly ; Christians will not glory in their genius, nor acquirements. Knowledge and wisdom are desirable : these are obtained, by God blessing the exercise of the mind in the search of them. The Christian, however, must hold them in their proper place. The
genius

genius of some is greatly superior to that of others. This may be evident to every artificer : In the learned world, this is displayed as in the mechanic : Among the inspired writers the same degrees, and variety, and superiority of genius appear. No real Christian, however, when he behaves as he should, will glory in the superiority of his genius and acquirements. He has nothing, but what he received from the Lord. Paul was a man of genius, learning, and of great acquirements : But in human learning he did not glory : He counted all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ. His cross is a great depth of love, justice, and of mercy ; which even through eternity, we shall not be able to fathom, yet we will forever glory in it. It is the wonder of ages, and the admiration of eternity. Glory then in it, and not in your own genius, nor acquirements. The most exalted genius soon may be blasted ; as when the sun riding in the heavens in all his glory, a cloud soon gathers, and from us hides his brilliancy : It is thus, often with genius ; some cloud of adversity obscures its splendour, or it is blasted by some unforeseen circumstance.

cumstance. But the glory of the cross of Christ shall never fade; and the happiness of those who behold it by faith in Him, shall never be destroyed; for throughout everlasting ages, unspeakable joy shall flow from the same cross into their souls.

In the fourth place; Christians will not glory in their own personal righteousness. No believer in Christ will say to another, "Stand by, I am holier than thou." The Christian will not imitate the proud Pharisee, who in the temple thanked God, that he was not as other men; but will like the Publican say unto God, "Be merciful to me a sinner." He considers himself, as an unprofitable servant, and all his righteousness as filthy rags: he views himself as a sinner in all his performances, knowing that in every thing he sins, and comes far short in glorifying God, as he should; he accounts it, a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came to save sinners, of whom, he views himself as the chief. He does not glory in being a sinner, but he glories in being more and more delivered from the power, and washed from the defilement, of sin.

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He believes, that no man can be justified before God in his own righteousness, but in the righteousness of Christ only: Therefore, by faith, (the gift of God), he puts on the righteousness of Christ, for salvation. Nevertheless, he lives righteously and soberly in this present evil world; he does justly, loves mercy, and walks humbly with his God; practising that holiness without which none shall see or enjoy heaven. True and saving faith in Christ humbles the heart, and produces reformation of conduct; kindles in the soul an ardent thirst after righteousness. The man who glories in his own righteousness, has not seen the evil of sin, and is devoid of saving faith. But, in the

Fifth place; Christians will not glory in the riches of this world. Fortune is fickle, and riches are uncertain as to their continuance. Men are frequently exalted to the height of prosperity, and then unexpectedly sunk into the deepest distress. Riches often betake to themselves wings, and fly from the grasp of their possessor. Therefore, that our comfort may not be destroyed by the vicissitudes of human life, God commands

mands us not to love the world nor the things thereof. There are however many persons in a Christian land, who profess to be followers of Christ, whose hearts, are notwithstanding, set upon the world, and who mind only earthly things: Who rejoice, by whatever means attained, in adding house to house, and field to field. The fact is, every one glories in that which he truly loves: He who loves the Lord Jesus Christ will glory in his holy name; and the immoderate lover of the world will glory in riches. It is, however, commendable in Christians to be industrious; or to have riches righteously acquired, is honourable, in proportion to the wise use which is made of them: The possessor may do much good by relieving the wants of the poor, and in propagating Christian knowledge, among the children of men. But the hand of the diligent does not always make rich. The Lord gives success, or withholds it as He thinks proper, He sees it necessary, often to exercise His people in the school of adversity. The love of God to any individual should not be estimated according

to largeness of the fortune he may enjoy. Lazarus found the way to Heaven, whilst the rich man was cast down into Hell. Therefore none should glory in the riches of this world, for, if any love them to such a degree as to glory in them, the love of God is not in their souls. But let all Christians remember, that vanity, and vexation of Spirit, is the universal motto, written on all terrestrial things.

I shall now proceed to shew, you as was proposed *Secondly*; in what Christians will glory.

And all true Christians imitate St Paul, in glorying in the cross of Christ. Though Jesus Christ was holy, harmless, and undefiled, yet he was condemned to expire on a *cross*, betwixt two malefactors. This *word* cross has various significations in the sacred scriptures. Persecution, and whatever affliction, God visits us with, is denominated a *cross*. Hence says Christ, "*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake will find*

“find it.” Persecution and afflictions should not keep us at a distance from Christ, but should cause us follow Him the more ardently. The same *word*, sometimes, signifies the entire doctrines of Divine Revelation. *The preaching of the cross, to all who are saved is the power of God.* It also merely means in some passages, the ignominious tree which was formed into a cross, on which our glorious Redeemer suffered. *They made Simon of Cyrene to bear his cross. And they commanded Jesus to come down from the cross.* But the word has still a more extensive meaning, *viz.* It points out the whole sufferings of Christ from His birth to His bloody death. Hence it is said of Him, *He endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of God.* The cross then in which St Paul gloried, and in which all true Christians glory, is the sufferings of Christ.

It may at first view appear barbarous to rejoice in the sufferings of their best friend; for it is unmanly and vicious even to glory in the sufferings of an enemy. How then do ye ask me, is it commendable in Christi-

ans to glory in the cross, or sufferings of Christ? Why, they do not glory in the grief and agony which their Lord endured; but in the voluntary substitution of Himself as their surety, and in the merits and consequences of His sufferings and death. When the Christian considers the magnitude of Christ's sufferings, he may, though no affliction is for the present joyous but grievous, patiently and contentedly bear whatever distress or cross God is pleased to lay upon him. The severest trials and afflictions, with which the people of God are visited, are prosperity and comfort, when compared to the cross of Christ. O how heavy a cross of affliction did He bear during all the days of His humanity? He was despised and rejected by men, and afflicted by God! A man of sorrow and acquainted with grief! Though the prince of life and of peace, yet born in a stable, and laid in a manger for His cradle! The degradation of His birth was a prelude to the more severe sufferings of His life and death. He Himself tells us the sympathetic tale; "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but

“but the Son of man had not a home, where
“to rest or lay His blessed head!” He came
unto His own friends and people, but they
received Him not! He was wounded in the
house of His friends! Though he was in-
nocence itself, was accused of blasphemy;
called a gluttonous man, a wine-bibber, a
friend of publicans and sinners. But for
the joy which was set before Him, He en-
dured this cross, and despised its shame.

At Gethsemane, a little before his death,
being in extreme agony, His very sweat up-
on account thereof was as it were great drops
of blood falling to the ground! Death, arm-
ed with dreadful stings, as numberless as the
sins of the whole of the Redeemed, falls up-
on the adorable Saviour: The sufferings of
His soul were more severe than the more
visible torture of His body: His soul was
exceeding sorrowful, even unto death:
Here at Gethsemane death seems to have
arrested Him, before His enemies seized
Him. It pleased the Lord to bruise Him,
and to put Him to grief, by ordering law
and justice to seize upon Him, through the
medium of death; and by the cruelty and
perfidy

perfidy of His enemies. There never was agony like what He endured ! He was betrayed and delivered into the hands of His enemies, by one of His own professed friends and disciples : They brought Him into the high priest's house ; from this, the chief priests (who were keen enemies to Christ) led Him away to Pilate, who found no fault in Him : But those cruel men were the more hardened against Him, and therefore, to inflame the judge against Him, they accused Him of sedition : They say, " He stirreth up the people ; " Pilate, upon hearing this, sends Him with His wicked accusers to Herod's bar : Herod and his men of war set Him at nought, and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous mock-robe, and sent Him to *Pilate* again. Though this unjust *judge* found no fault in Him, he ordered Him to be scourged ! The soldiers by authority platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, clothed Him with a purple robe, and in derision said, " Hail, King of the Jews !" They smote Him with the palm of their hands, and did spit upon Him ! Horrid cruelty ! They led Him away to the
place

place of crucifixion, bearing His cross; but the body of the blessed Jesus being so worn out with fatigue and with pain, was unable to bear it. They therefore laid it on Simon of Cyrene: They arrive at Mount Calvary, the cross is fixed in the earth, and lo, our blessed Lord is placed between two malefactors, like them to be crucified, as if He had been a murderer or an evil doer: See how they nailed Him to the accursed tree, piercing His hands and feet! *Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.* His sufferings being severe above all description, He cried out, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama Sabachthani? My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" He bowed His head, and yielded up the ghost! The soldiers pierced His snow-white side, and from it healing blood and water flowed. And thus, as to merit, He finished the eternal salvation of his saints.

During the time of acting this awful tragedy, yon brilliant sun heard the moans of His Creator, from Calvary's Mount, and hid himself in darkness. And behold, the strong veil of tapestry in the temple, which was
between

between the Holy and the Most Holy Place; heard His moans, and did rend in the midst from the top to bottom:—The land around the cross heard them; and as terrified did tremble:—The rocks, more feeling than the hearts of men, heard our Saviour's agonizing groans, and as in pity joined in His sufferings bursting asunder! When the everlasting Rock was so dreadfully bruised, how could the workmanship of His hands be unmoved?—The graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints, which in them slept, heard the doleful cry of Jesus from the cross, and arose; and came out of their graves. After His resurrection, they went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Such sublime scenery, inclosed our glorious Redeemer, when He swallowed up death in victory.

Let us now consider,

Thirdly; The cause which Christians have for so glorying in the cross of Christ. His cross is not a barren tree; but it bears fruits abundant for nourishing the immortal minds of men. It is the ever-beautiful and the ever-fruitful tree of life in Mount Zion,

Zion, or in the church of God, which no storm can blight; whose fruit is exhaustless; nay, though it feeds all the redeemed Saints of God, cannot be lessened, nor be by any tempest destroyed. Blessed be God, there is now, no cherubim with flaming sword, turning every way to prevent men from resting under its shadow, nor from eating its delicious fruit: But the ministers of the gospel, invite all to come under its shelter, to eat of its fruit and live; and the Spirit of all grace is ready, able, and willing, to lead the seekers of God and of happiness to repose under its healing leaves. It is also the genuine tree of liberty, which is fructified with the blood of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. What would life signify without the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty? Man without liberty, though an heir of immortality, here, in this state, is only a grovelling slave. Jesus Christ came to this earth to bless men with true liberty: He taught the rights of man, and sealed His doctrine with His blood. His gospel enjoins kings and governors to be merciful and just, and subjects to be loyal and

and peaceable, and all to be virtuous and good. If the inhabitants of this earth regulated their conduct entirely in every case, by the gospel of Christ, there would be no impiety, no injustice, no cruelty, no tyranny, amongst them; but charity, benevolence, harmony, and love would prevail universally. In it we are commanded to follow after "*Whatsoever things are lovely, " whatsoever things are pure, just, and of " good report ;*" and by the said gospel we are enjoined, "*All things whatsoever we " would that men should do to us, to do so to " them : for this is the law and the pro- " phets.*" And indeed it is likely, until the gospel of Christ be practically received by men, they shall continue to destroy one-another by war, persecution, cruelty, and by tyranny; its propagation is the only thing which will drive away these fiends from the face of the earth. Though the religion of Christ has been made the pretext for shedding much of the blood of the human race, yet it, in itself, has no tendency that way, it is for peace and good order. Oppressors, whatever profession of religion

religion they do, and may assume, have no inheritance in the kingdom of God. But more particularly, in the

First place; Christians glory in the cross of Christ, because He, through it, hath procured for them the forgiveness of all their sins. They became guilty and liable to undergo the pains of the divine law. The sentence of it, is, "*Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*"

Jesus took our nature upon Him that He might suffer for us, and redeem us, who were sunk into misery, and who were under the heavy, but just condemnation of the law, that we might be received in the family of God as His adopted children.— That all our sins might be freely forgiven without money, or price, from us.— That we might be at peace with God; and with our own consciences. Every person that is convinced of the guilt and evil nature of sin, is sensible, that the forgiveness of iniquity is an invaluable blessing. Hence said the Psalmist, "*Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.*"

A a

" Blessed

"Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." This blessedness comes to all who receive it only by the cross of Christ. Though the sins of the people of God are forgiven them, they were not forgiven Christ; He suffered severely for them all. *"He was wounded for our transgressions, and He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."* Come then all ye that labour and are heavy laden, with your sins to the cross of Christ, and receive the pardon of all your transgressions. Here is meritorious blood to procure the forgiveness of all your sins, and here is water to wash you from the defilement of them; and here also is power to set you at liberty from the slavery of Satan.

Secondly; They glory in the cross, because Jesus Christ through it hath made them and their heavenly Father friends.—

When

When they were enemies, they were reconciled by the death of Christ. The Almighty indeed never hated his people, but their sins only : Their iniquity made them odious in His sight. But He had compassion on them, and sent His Son to redeem them, and through Him their sins are not only pardoned, but they are received into his favour and protection : And He bestows upon them all things fit and necessary for them to enjoy : Having delivered up his Son to the death for them all, how shall he not with Him freely give them all things ? He is their reconciled heavenly Father, and they are His adopted loving and obedient children ; this near relation, and this true friendship, subsist betwixt God and His people, in virtue of the sufferings or cross of Christ. Jesus was the slain Lamb from the foundation of the world. God was, and is in Him, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses. The cross satisfies the justice of God for the injury which men had done by transgressing the divine law, and it slays the enmity of the carnal mind, reconciles God to man,

man, and man to God, restores man to the favour of God, which is better than life and all its enjoyments. Wonderful and conciliating cross ! May thy virtues be applied to our souls.

In virtue of the cross, the holy Spirit comes to the Heirs of immortal happiness ; who makes their hearts new, and their minds willing in a day of his power, to serve the living God. Hence said our blessed Redeemer to His disciples, *It is expedient for you that I go away : For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart I will send Him unto you. And when the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you unto all truth. He shall glorify me : for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.* He makes the people of God holy in heart and in life, by leading them in the ways of uprightness. True holiness cannot exist in any person, unless a partaker of the blessed Spirit. *If any man has not the spirit of Christ he is none of His. Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves ; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except*

ye be reprobates. The doctrines of the cross set holiness in its proper foundation. Abide in me (says Christ) and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. All who abide in Christ, and glory in His cross, are a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Thirdly; Christians glory in the cross, because Christ by it hath vanquished death, and taken away its sting. I know nothing in the universe which can rationally reconcile men to death but the cross. Many of the heathens, and others, through a kind of cowardice, but which is called by some, fortitude, have treated death with contempt, and have defied all its terrors: Impatient and cowardly under the ills of human existence, they have chosen death rather than life. It is, however, to all considerate men, *a serious thing to die.*—Death in all its appearances is loathsome and disagreeable to flesh and blood.—To endure unexplained agony,—to cease to exist in the body,—to be laid in the dust, and become food to worms, or sunk into the bottom of the sea
to

to be devoured by rapacious animals, on such a prospect, the heart naturally shrinks. But that is not all.—The soul to take her flight to immortal regions of delight, or, dreadful alternative to the howling Pit of the damned.—Verily impenitent sinners, may, indeed, tremble on the view of death;—but die they must.—O how ill prepared are they for that event! Their nature recoils at the thought of their dissolution, and conscious guilt, unrepented of, fills their souls with horror. If they, finally, continue in their unhallowed condition, they shall meet death, and it too armed with tormenting stings as numberless as their transgressions. They shall then experimentally know, that the wages of sin is *death* in the full extent of the *word*. Sin at the last, however delusive it is in the mean time to its practitioners, shall *bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder*. When the wicked man dies, how dreadful is his departure, and awful his final doom?

In

In that dread moment, how *his* frantic soul
 Raves round the walls of her clay tenement ;
 Runs to each avenue ; and shrieks for help ;
 But shrieks in vain ! how wishfully she looks
 On all she's leaving, now no longer her's !
 A little longer, yet a little longer,
 O ! might she stay, to wash away her crimes,
 And fit her for her passage ! Mournful fight !
 Her very eyes weep blood ; and ev'ry groan
 She heaves, is fill'd with horror : but *death*,
 Like a staunch murd'rer, steady to *his* purpose,
 Pursues her close through ev'ry lane of life,
 Nor misses once the track ; but presses on ;
 Till forc'd at last, to the tremendous verge ;
 At once she sinks *into the gulph of wo* *.

Such is the end of the wicked.—But the
 Christian who truly glories in the cross of
 Christ, has nothing to fear in his departure.
 He may with composure of mind face the
 grim Tyrant, and with pleasure commit his
 soul and body to the keeping of his God.
 He may say unto God as the Psalmist said,
*yea " Though I walk through the valley of the
 shadow of death, I will fear no evil : for
 thou art with me ; thy rod and thy staff they
 comfort*

* See an excellent poem, intituled the Grave.

comfort me." Having such a protector and such a friend with him, death shall do him no harm, but shall terminate all his sorrows, and be a prelude to an everlasting day of joys soul-enrapturing. The Apostle Paul, in the faith of this, had a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better than to be in this world. Death to him had no terrors;—Because he knew, that his Saviour, by the cross, had conquered death, and swallowed it up in victory. THE GLORIOUS REDEEMER, by His sufferings, and by his departure on the cross, overcame death, and him who had the power of this absolute Tyrant. When men are slain by the hands of their enemies they are vanquished; But Jesus Christ is a glorious Conqueror even in His death; By this cross He hath obtained immortal trophies, and hath gained honour and renown which forever shall endure. His followers may now exult for joy, and triumphantly say, *O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our*
Lord

Lord Jesus Christ. He hath by his sufferings fully atoned for their sins, and so hath taken away the sting of death. He hath arisen from the grave, and so obtained a complete victory over death. Therefore, instead of death and the grave being frightful to the disciples of Christ, they are desirable. The doctrines of the cross inspire them with the faith of a blessed immortality, and with the hope of a glorious resurrection, they are therefore willing to die in Christ Jesus. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. To them the grave is only a bed of rest: a place for refining their bodies, for making them fit for becoming inhabitants of heaven. *Sing then ye who dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs.* But, in the

Fourth place; Christians glory in the cross of Christ, because He through it has purchased heaven and immortal happiness there for them. Our first parents when they came from the hands of their Maker were placed in a most beautiful Paradise, and there they enjoyed His favour and the light of His countenance. In consequence

of their guilt in transgressing His law, they lost His favour, and were cast out of Paradise. But Jesus came into the world, to purchase for His people a better Paradise than that which they lost by the fall, a heaven of eternal glory and of unspeakable delights. There they will enjoy God as their portion. Jesus hath told us that in His Father's house are many mansions. Perhaps, that heavenly dwelling is larger than all the planets of our Solar System would be though formed in one. In the scriptures it is called a city, a country, the New Jerusalem, and the New Heavens and the New Earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherever it is, and whatever its bulk may be, the matter of which it consists is undoubtedly pure and incorruptible. The mansions which are in it are everlasting, and are delightful above all description. There is no impurity in the heavenly regions. No distress finds its way into the heavenly mansions. The inhabitants of this delightful country shall not say, That they are sick;—but health, beauty and joy shall forevermore abound :—Peace, harmony,

ny, prosperity, and glory shall reign forevermore. No death shall be there;—but the tide of life from the fountain pure shall always flow upon all the inhabitants rejoicing their hearts, keeping all their powers in perfect harmony, causing them to sing the praises of Redeeming love more and more melodious throughout eternity, and strengthening them to do whatever work may be assigned them without wearying. So that the employment of the Redeemed, in all its probable variety, shall be for ease and delight as an eternal rest. All conjectures however concerning the grandeur of heaven and the happiness of the Redeemed fall infinitely short of what they are in reality. For when Paul was caught up to the third heaven, he heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Let it be our concern to be found in Christ by a true and a living faith, to be walking in Him who is the way to heaven, the truth and the life: No man cometh unto the Father but by Him. When we arrive in heaven we shall see it as it is, and be enraptured with its appearance, and with the
glory

glory of our GREAT EMMANUEL. O blessed Jesus! who hath procured by thy cross such a glorious heaven for thy followers! Thus I have finished as I could, what I proposed in the method. Now,

The improvement of this subject may be summed up in the following paragraphs.

First; Endeavour to know what spirit ye are of, whether ye belong to the world which lieth in wickedness, or to Jesus Christ, the LORD. They who are in an unregenerate condition, do mind the things of the flesh. And they who are the true disciples of Christ, do mind heavenly things. The former glory in the world and in the things thereof. The latter glory in nothing save in the cross of Jesus Christ. Examine the word of God, and hear the voice of your own consciences, attend carefully to what both say concerning your state and actions, and ye certainly may know, whether ye are in a state of grace with God, or are enemies and aliens to Him. He still waiteth to be gracious unto all penitent sinners; therefore, though the last mentioned case
should

should happen to be your's, let not despair enter your souls ; but forsake your evil way, and turn unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon you, and He will abundantly pardon all your transgressions. Such of you, on the other hand, as may find yourselves in a state of reconciliation with God, I hail you as highly favoured and happy persons. Be not high minded, but fear, lest ye, by any part of your conduct, offend the Almighty. Be not weary in well-doing ; for, in due season, ye shall reap, if ye faint not.

Secondly ; From this subject we may see both the great condescension of Christ, and His wonderful love to His people. He, though the Ancient of days, the equal of the eternal Father, humbled Himself unto death, even unto the ignominious death of the cross, that He might raise His fallen and miserable people to the kingdom of glory, of grandeur, and of happiness in heaven. Amazing humility ! Astonishing condescension ! Unparalleled love was the impelling cause,—love, the greatest and the purest which ever existed, or can be in the universe ;

verse ! The dignity of His nature gave His cross all its virtues. Hence His blood cleanseth from all sin. O ! love the Lord then, who first loved you, and gave Himself for you. When He bore such a heavy cross for you, willingly and patiently bear ye whatever cross He may be pleased in the course of His Providence to lay upon you : Take it up and follow Him : By the cross He will lead you to the crown.

Thirdly ; We may see from this discourse, and from the subjects with which it is connected, that the cross of Christ is the real tree of liberty. Jesus sets liberty in justice and in mercy, its proper soil. Liberty shall never flourish in any other foundation. What is liberty ? Deliverance from the reigning power of sin, and laws to protect us in doing what is just and right ; and laws to punish us for doing what is cruel and unjust. Any thing else called liberty is only slavery. The law of God is the only standard of rectitude. His law is briefly contained in the ten commandments. Our Saviour's sermon on the Mount is a just and excellent comment upon them. Whatever human

human laws are contrary to the law of God are unjust laws, and ought not to be obeyed by Christians: But before they withhold obedience they must be convinced that the spirit of Christ teacheth in the scriptures, that they are contrary to the law of God. They must obey God, rather than man. Many professing Christians bow to an emblem of the cross of Christ, who do all in their power to crucify again Himself, who bled and died upon it: They kiss a crucifix, and stab His followers! In as much as they do so to them, they do the same to Him; for so He considers it. Papists have reared a structure of superstition, of tyranny, and of cruelty, unparalleled; but having its foundation in murder, and bloodshed, it shall one day fall and crush its inhabitants. The true religion of Jesus, as it is taught in the venerable scriptures, shall soon universally prevail. This tree of liberty will be planted, and shall flourish in every place of the earth tenanted by man. Infidelity shall be rooted out from amongst the nations: For God hath said, *All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord;*
and

and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him ; For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He is the Governor among the nations.

With a view to bring about this desirable event, all the people of God should cordially unite in raising funds, and in sending missionaries, to every part of the earth, (where there is any probability of success), for spreading the glorious gospel of Christ among the children of men. If they unite with heart and hand, in this scheme, in which all true Christians may unite, it may not only be the mean of carrying the knowledge of the gospel to the heathen, but, perhaps, also of bringing the followers of Christ, of all denominations, to a better understanding among themselves. In this scheme, all Protestant Dissenters, Presbyterians, Baptists, general and particular ; Independents, Episcopals ; and all the lovers of our Lord Jesus Christ, who are agreed, as to the great and chief articles of His holy religion, may readily join.

In offering the gospel to the heathen, party spirit should not appear. But all the children of God ought to join as one, and endeavour

deavour to shew the people, who dwell in darkness, the light of the gospel, and the way to salvation by our glorious Redeemer. This is the way to plant the real tree of liberty among the nations. This is the way to promote the happiness of our fellow creatures. To carry the said design into execution effectually, what a sum might be raised, by all professing Christians, in Great Britain and in Ireland, contributing, each, only one shilling, or less or more, according to their circumstances? But, perhaps, before this should be done, a general convention of ministers ought to be held; two or three chosen from each party by their brethren; they might meet then in a convention, convened on purpose, to deliberate on the best method for carrying the knowledge of the gospel to lands devoid of it. Something like this has been done already in London, and in other places, but in miniature only to what is here recommended. Such a convention being held, and having adopted a plan for carrying this truly benevolent design into execution, the members of the convention and its constituents, would hence-

ful unto your Redeemer, and He will bring
you soon to the enjoyment of immortal life.

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THE END.

